Photo

ENTERTAINMENT / N1

Pinay Marie-France Arcilla a hit in off-broadway show

BUSINESS / B1

Aboitiz wins bidding for Magat power plant in Isabela with $530-M offer

METRO / A25

UP Board of Regents to decide on tuition increase today

SPORTS / A23

Reigning champ Catalan wins wushu's -52 kg gold medal, RP's 4th in the 15th Asian Games

Tipon to use Asian Games bonus to build dream home

By Ted S. Melendres
Sports Editor

DOHA, QATAR—WHEN HE RECEIVES HIS P1.5-million bonus incentive, boxing gold medalist Joan Tipon intends to deposit the money in a bank, then use it to build a house for his family of four.

"*Wala pa akong sariling bahay* (I don't have a house yet)," said the soft-spoken farmer's son

TIPON/ A22

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Friday, December 15, 2006 ★★ 17 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 7 P18 website: inquirer.net

Manny gives ma 'old' car plus driver and guard

By Aquiles Zonio
Inquirer Mindanao

WOW! SOSYAL SI MOMMY! BIG TIME!

GENERAL SANTOS City—When Filipino boxing idol Manny Pacquiao's bank account became fatter after he floored Mexican Erik Morales Nov. 19

MANNY/ A22

Pols barred on rally stage

Organizers say Brothers Mike, Eddie also banned from grandstand

By Christian V. Esguerra

ORGANIZERS OF THE PRAYER RALLY AGAINST Charter change announced yesterday politicians would not be allowed on the Quirino Grandstand along with Bro. Mike Velarde of El Shaddai and Bro. Eddie Villanueva of Jesus Is Lord Movement.

"Participants should just carry the rosary," said Henrietta de Villa, former ambassador to the Vatican and chief organizer of the event. She said that placards, banners and streamers should be left on Taft Avenue—well out of sight of the anticipated huge gathering called by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

De Villa said the stage would be exclusively limited to prelates and priests who will concelebrate a Mass. She said the strict protocol was meant to keep the occasion devoid of any political color.

"No politicians will be allowed on stage, none at all," she told the INQUIRER yesterday in a phone interview. She said that since the CBCP had sent no invitations to specific persons or groups, the event was open to anyone believing in the call to "watch and pray" for recent political events in the country.

The other day, PNP Director General Oscar Calderon and his Metro Manila police chief Director Reynaldo Varilla also warned politicians and movie stars would be arrested if they mount the stage and issue political statements.

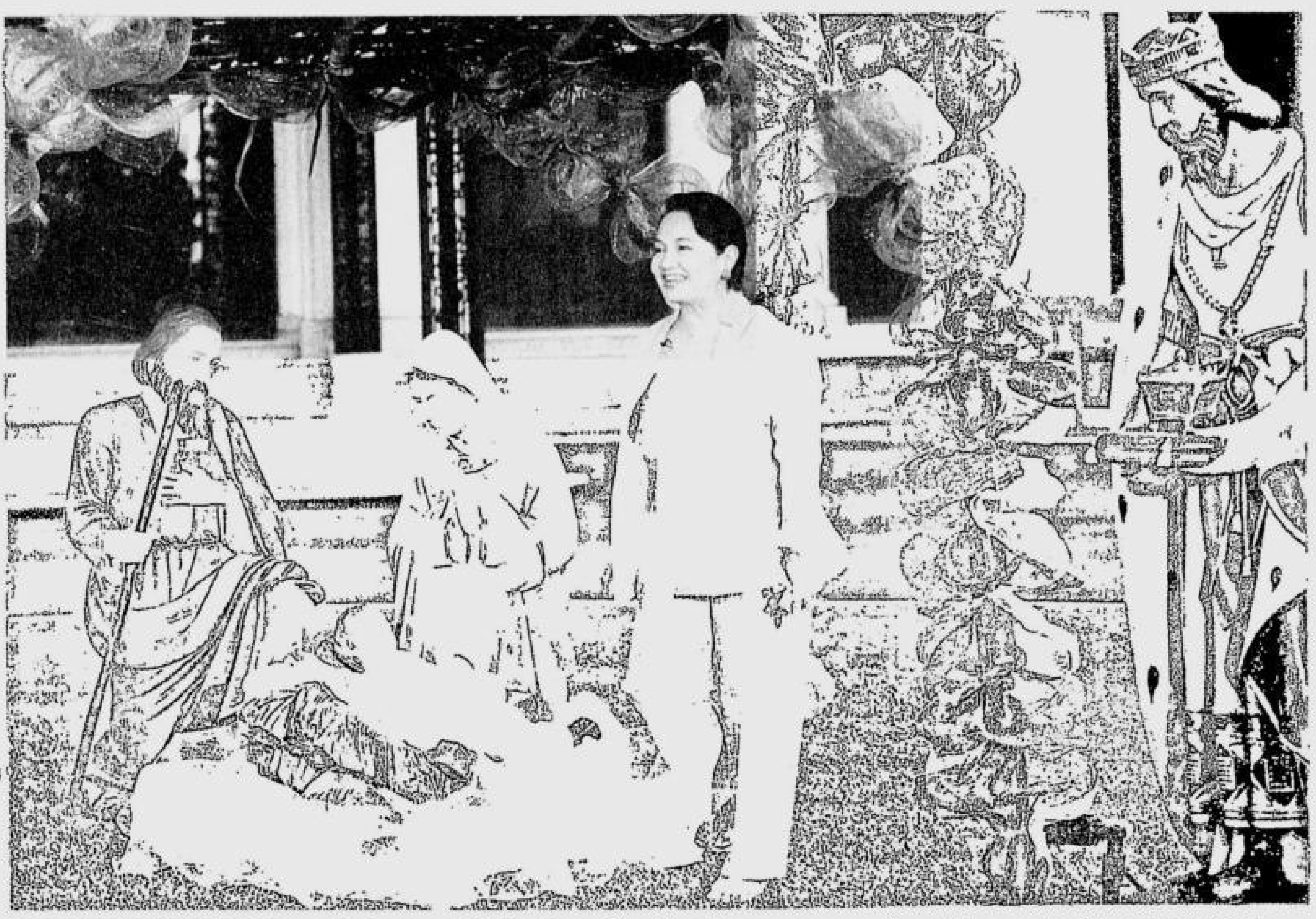
Former President Corazon Aquino, senators, congressmen and other politicians who had said they would join the prayer rally would be confined to the Quirino grounds.

De Villa said Velarde had been informed of the program and had expressed cooperation with the Church. She said there was no official contact with Villanueva whose group, along with Iglesia ni Cristo, had announced support of the prayer rally.

"We don't have problems with that," said Villanueva's son, party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva. He said his father would not show up on Sunday on the grandstand.

The rally was called by angry bishops after President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in the House of Representatives last week met overnight and in a rowdy plenary rammed through a resolution

POLITICIANS/ A21



NATIVITY SCENE PLUS ONE, or what's wrong with this picture? President Arroyo appears to disrupt the serenity of the endlessly loved Christmas tableau. But, folks, it's just for show—biz that is. Directed by Lupita Kashiwahara, Ms Arroyo is filming her Christmas message with the life-sized "belen" as prop in the Palace grounds on Thursday.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Sy, Tan, Zobel lead list of 40 richest Pinoys

HENRY SY

LUCIO TAN

JAIME ZOBEL

DANDING COJUANGCO

MALL TYCOON HENRY SY IS one of three billionaires topping a list of the Philippines' 40 richest people who have a combined net worth of $16 billion, Forbes magazine reported in its latest Asian edition. *(Full list on Page A8.)*

Forbes Asia released its first Philippines' rich list, but said that as a group, the 40 wealthiest Filipinos are the least affluent when compared with their counterparts in the region.

The magazine attributed that to the Philippines' chronic political instability and its small stock market, with an estimated capitalization of $50 billion.

The Dec. 25 issue appeared on the newsstands yesterday.

According to Forbes Asia, Sy has a net worth of $4 billion, followed by another Chinese-Filipino magnate, Lucio Tan, with a net worth of $2.3 billion.

Sy, 82, owns 27 shopping malls in the Philippines and several others in China. He also owns Banco de Oro, a universal bank, and has substantial shares in China Bank and Equitable PCIBank. He also owns Highlands Prime Holdings, a high-end property developer.

Tan, 72, owns Philippine Airlines, the country's flag carrier. His business interests include tobacco (Fortune Tobacco), liquor (Asia Brewery and Tanduay Holdings), and banking (Philippine National Bank and Allied Bank).

He also has extensive property holdings in Hong Kong, China and other parts of Asia.

Jaime Zobel de Ayala, 72, came in third on the Forbes list of richest Filipinos with a net worth

SY, TAN/ A8

It's official: GMA jumps off Cha-cha express

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO has jumped off her self-styled Charter change express in the face of a firestorm of protests against a Palace-House initiative to railroad a constituent assembly in amending the Constitution without the Senate's participation.

"Philippine democracy will always find the proper time and opportunity for Charter reform at a time when the people deem it ripe and needful and in the manner they deem proper. The nation must consolidate now and I call upon all our institutions and sectors to stand as one for the country's future," Ms Arroyo said in a statement.

Also yesterday, the House of Representatives voted to archive its resolution convening a constituent assembly (Con-ass) this week to revise the Constitution and adopt the parliamentary system.

Gabriel Claudio, presidential political adviser, said that Malacañang was now training its sights on next year's elections for senators, congressmen and local officials.

"All roads lead to the elections of May 2007," Claudio told the INQUIRER. He said the administration's candidates for the Senate will be an-

IT'S OFFICIAL/ A21

Pozon violating VFA; Smith appeals case

By Armand N. Nocum

LANCE CPL. DANIEL SMITH YESterday asked the Court of Appeals to stop the implementation of a Makati judge's order that he continue to be detained at the Makati City Jail.

In a petition for a temporary restraining order filed by his lawyers, the US Marine convicted of raping a Filipino woman also assailed Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Benjamin Pozon for purportedly misinterpreting the pertinent provision in the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement and for holding views "in direct contravention" of the VFA.

"When the law is clear, there is no room for interpretation. For the first duty of the court is to apply the law. The court has no power to change but only to interpret the law as it stands at any time," read the opening statement of Smith's 22-page petition.

"In a situation where, despite the clear and unequivocal language of the law, a magistrate, wittingly or unwittingly, insists on an interpretation … that is diametrically opposed to, and in direct contravention of, the express provisions of law, petitioner … submits that [the] magistrate committed grave abuse of discretion that may be remedied through certiorari," it read.

Thus, according to Smith through his lawyers led by Jose Justiniano, there is no basis for Pozon's

POZON/ A8

HE'S HOT but Judge Pozon keeps his cool.

Judge says Constitution, int'l law are on his side

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE FILIPINO JUDGE WHO HAD CONVICTED A US Marine of raping a Filipino woman yesterday said that he had the Constitution and international law in mind when he dismissed the soldier's request to be returned to US custody.

Reluctant to be lionized for a decision described by many as brave and patriotic, Judge Benjamin Pozon told the INQUIRER that his decision to junk the request of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith despite the concurrence in it of Philippine and US authorities was faithful to the spirit of the debated RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

"It's in compliance with the VFA. *Pwede ba akong lumabas doon* (Can I deviate from it) when it's part

JUDGE/ A8

Esperon clears 2 officers at start of court-martial

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

CAMP CAPINPIN, TANAY, RIZAL—Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. dropped a bombshell at the start of the court-martial of 30 officers led by ex-Marine chief Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda and ex-Scout Ranger chief Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, acquitting two of the accused without any explanation.

The officers went on trial for allegedly plotting a coup against President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier this year.

The alleged plot was to have been carried out with communist rebels and other anti-Arroyo groups on the 20th anniversary of the fall of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos on Feb. 24.

Esperon issued the order to exclude Lieutenant Colonels Romulo Gualdrapa and Valentin Hizon, both from the Marines, from the charge sheet on the eve of the court's first hearing here.

Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano, chief of the AFP Southern Luzon Command and court president, announced Esperon's order to drop the charges against Gualdrapa and Hizon before the court could be formally convened.

While the remaining 28 accused congratulated Gualdrapa and Hizon, their defense counsels roundly protested the arbitrary amendment to the charge sheet.

One lawyer even questioned whether the trial was being conducted at Esperon's "caprice and whim."

In his memo dated Dec. 13, Esperon did not give a reason for clearing Gualdrapa and Hizon of the charge of mutiny and of conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

He instead cited Gualdrapa's appeal dated Nov. 23 and the affidavits of Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga and two other Marine officers absolving Gualdra-

ESPERON CLEARS/ A12

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Eastern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers, while Visayas and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/12/14/06 SOURCE PAGASA

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2006

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Misuari flies home to register

GAGGED: Nur Misuari is tight-lipped as he boards a vehicle to take him to the airport.

JULIE S. ALIPALA / INQUIRER MINDANAO

By Julie S. Alipala
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—DETAINED Moro leader Nur Misuari, was allowed to fly to his hometown in Jolo onboard a chartered flight from here yesterday to re-register for the 2007 elections.

Misuari, who said he intends to run as governor of Sulu next year, arrived in this southern city yesterday morning onboard a Cebu Pacific flight from Manila with five escorts from the police's Special Action Force (SAF). He was also accompanied by officials from the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP) and several ranking members of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

Misuari had led the MNLF through decades of secessionist revolt then became first governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) after a peace agreement with the government in 1996. However, he was accused of ordering his men to attack an army base in 2001 and has been in military custody since 2002.

The renegade governor was stricken off the voters' list two years ago during a government drive to trim the allegedly bloated voters' list in the Autonomous Region. The Comelec removed the names of voters who did not revalidate their registration, including that of Misuari who was in jail in Laguna.

Armed with a court-approved pass, Misuari was temporarily billeted at the Orchid Garden Hotel near the airport where he stayed for almost five hours before taking the chartered plane to Jolo.

He was not allowed to talk with media or guests during his stay here.

Brig. General Benjamin Dolorfino of the government's Ad Hoc Joint Action Committee (AHJAG) said Misuari was prohibited from talking with anyone except to his security escorts and OPAPP officials.

"He is bound by a court order against meeting with any group and making public statements," Dolorfino said.

Jamasali Abdurahman, vice chair of the MNLF joint monitoring committee, said Misuari was excited to see his people and relatives.

"He was happy to be with his people and we are also happy that the government granted him his right to suffrage in his own homeland," Abdurahman said.

He said Misuari would be registering in Barangay Tulay in Jolo.

Misuari was expected to finish his registration in time for his return flight to Manila yesterday evening. *With a report from Jeoffrey Maitem*

NOGRALES

NBI bares plot to kill Davao solon

POLITICIANS YESTERDAY WERE ADVISED to beef up their security as the National Bureau of Investigation had uncovered an assassination plot against House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, the congressman for Davao City's first district.

"Government officials should take extra care because the 2007 elections are nearing," said Reynaldo Esmeralda, the NBI deputy director for regional operations service.

The NBI warned Nograles against attending a Christmas party at the Grand Regal Hotel in Davao City last Wednesday because of information it had received.

The congressman's son, Karlo, attended the Christmas party of the Association of Regional Executives of National Agencies (Arena) in his father's stead.

The source warned that Nograles would be killed if he went to the party, Esmeralda said.

"Our informant told us that Lanao-based gunmen were hired to kill Nograles for P5 million," he said.

Nograles said the plot would not stop him from "functioning the same and usual way."

In a text message, he said he had no idea who could be behind the plot.

"I have no idea why I am being hit. But assassination is part of the hazards of politics. It's up to the Lord if he will allow it. My life will go on and I will still proceed with my normal way," he said.

Aside from suspicious-looking individuals loitering around the Nograles residence in Davao City, Karlo said he noticed a suspicious-looking character on board a red motorcycle outside the hotel last Wednesday.

Esmeralda said an artist's sketch was made of the suspect.

"We are likewise looking into how this case could be connected to Pasig Rep. Robert Jaworski Jr.'s case," Esmeralda said.

Jaworski's van exploded in Pasig last Tuesday but the congressman was unhurt.

Esmeralda said the assassination plot against Nograles was uncovered by the local NBI office in Davao City.

"According to the information that we got, the congressman would be shot during or after the party…so we have advised him not to attend the party," he said.

Esmeralda said the NBI has not been able to determine the motive but was able to identify at least four suspects.

He said the suspects were all from the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and were being hunted down. *Margaux Ortiz with Jeffrey Tupas, Inquirer Mindanao*

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Antiterror troops press pursuit of Abu Sayyaf

GOVERNMENT FORCES HAVE INTENsified operations against suspected al-Qaida-linked militants to prevent a possible attack when postponed twin Asian summits involving 16 heads of state resume next month, a top security official said Thursday.

The covert counterterrorist operations by police and military forces were under way from Metro Manila to southern Philippines, including Jolo island and Zamboanga peninsula, according to the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he's not authorized to talk to the media.

Intelligence teams have not monitored any presence of the militants, including those from the local Abu Sayyaf group or the Indonesian-based Jemaah Islamiyah, in Cebu—the venue of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' summit and an East Asian summit—but security measures were in place to prevent their entry, he said.

Intelligence assessments showed that the militants had planned to disrupt the summits but were hampered by a lack of funds and government offensives that have kept them mostly on the run, the official said.

As far as they know, Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khaddafy Janjalani and top Indonesian terror suspect Dulmatin, two militants who were reported to have planned attacks against the Asian summits, have not been able to escape from Jolo due to massive U.S.-backed offensives. Other militants were also on the run from troops in nearby Maguindanao province, he said.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's government abruptly postponed the Dec. 11-13 annual summits Friday, citing a typhoon that was blowing near Cebu, which hosts the country's second largest city. As some forecasters expected, the typhoon largely spared the island province.

Security officials, however, said the postponement was influenced by concerns over terror threats. British and other foreign travel advisories had warned that militants may be in the "final stages of planning attacks."

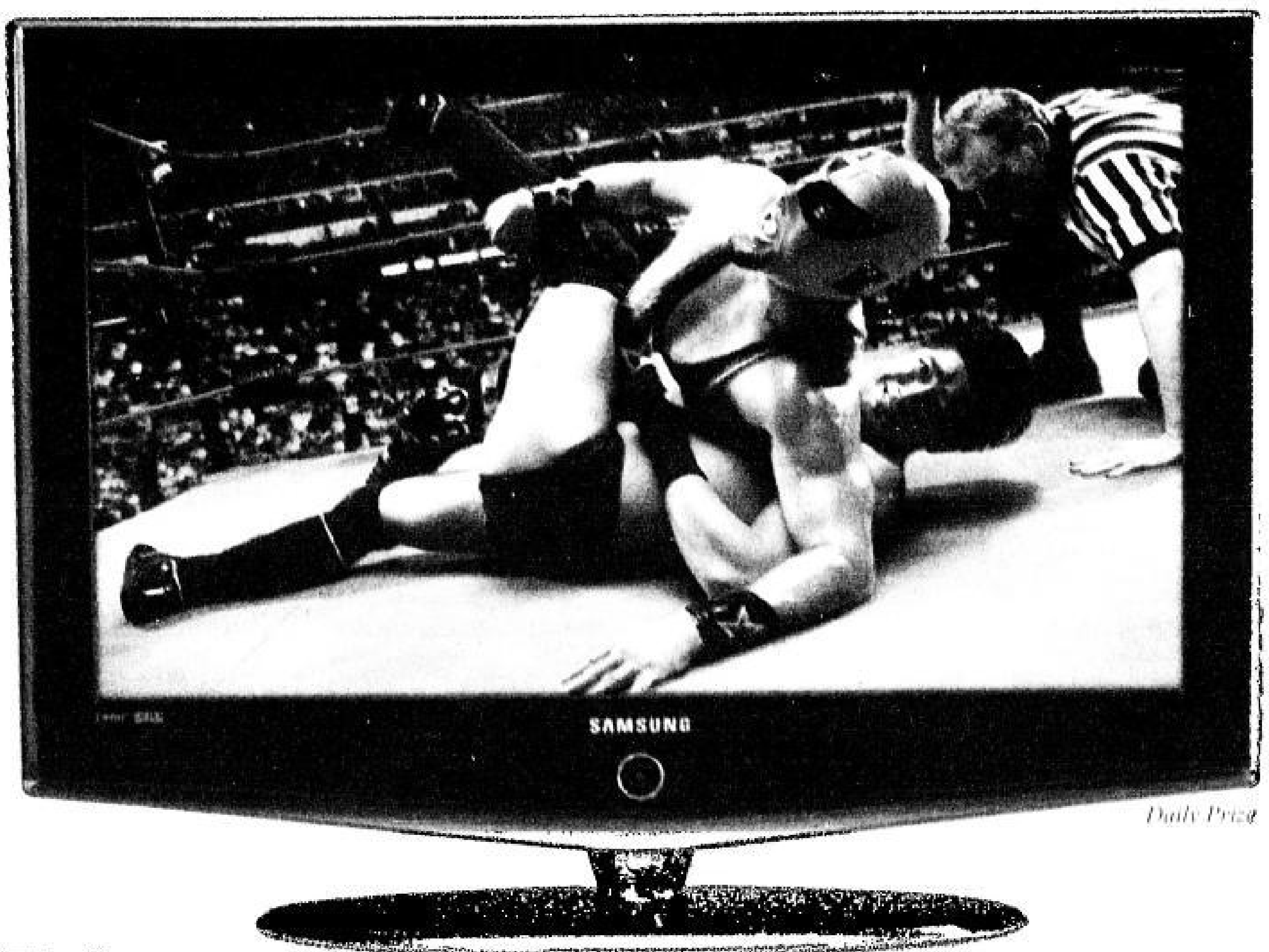
A ranking police official, who also refused to be named, said planned anti-government protests this week, along with fresh coup rumors, may have also been considered by Arroyo.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen said Tuesday that the threat to the summits was twofold: the typhoon and terrorism.

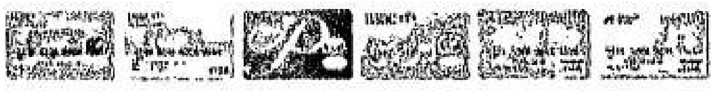
Arroyo has faced stinging criticisms due to the postponement. Japanese Trade Minister Akira Amari called the typhoon explanation "extremely puzzling" and said the situation has undermined the Philippines' credibility.

Marciano Paynor, head of the summit organizing committee, reiterated that the typhoon prompted the postponement and added it was backed by Asean's 10 member countries, many of which have confirmed their attendance in the summits' proposed resumption in January.

The leaders of Asean's dialogue partners—Australia, China, Japan, India, South Korea and New Zealand—have yet to confirm their attendance, he said. *AP*



Grand Prize



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marie france

E. Visayas: Let there be light

TACLOBAN CITY—LET THERE BE LIGHT ON Christmas Day.

The National Transmission Corp. (TransCo) and some electric cooperatives in the Eastern Visayas are doubling their efforts to restore electricity to the typhoon-hit areas of the region before Christmas Day.

A partial assessment conducted by TransCo showed that at least 60 electrical poles were damaged when typhoon "Seniang" hit the region on Dec. 9.

Edna Legaspina, the Ormoc City-based TransCo corporate communications officer, said the inspection of transmission lines to determine the extent of the damage was still going on.

Rustom Solon, TransCo department manager for the Leyte and Samar area, was at the head of a group conducting an aerial survey at the same time that TransCo line inspectors were conducting line-by-line foot patrol inspections, said Legaspina.

TransCo has already restored power to most of Tacloban City and the towns of Alangalang, Sta. Fe, Jaro, Pastrana, Tunga, Capoocan, Carigara, Barugo, San Miguel, Palo, Babatngon, Tanauan, Tolosa, Javier, Dulag, MacArthur, La Paz, Julita, Abuyog and Mahaplag.

Electricity has also been restored in about 80 percent of households in the western Samar capital of Catbalogan.

But Northern Samar, which was badly hit by typhoon Milenyo last September, and Eastern Samar, where typhoon Seniang made its landfall last Saturday, have remained without electricity.

At least 10 towns are still without electricity in Eastern Samar, the hardest hit of the three provinces on Samar island.

Their having light on Christmas Day would apparently depend on how fast the transmission lines supplying power, directly or indirectly, to these provinces can be restored.

Vicente S. Labro, Inquirer Visayas

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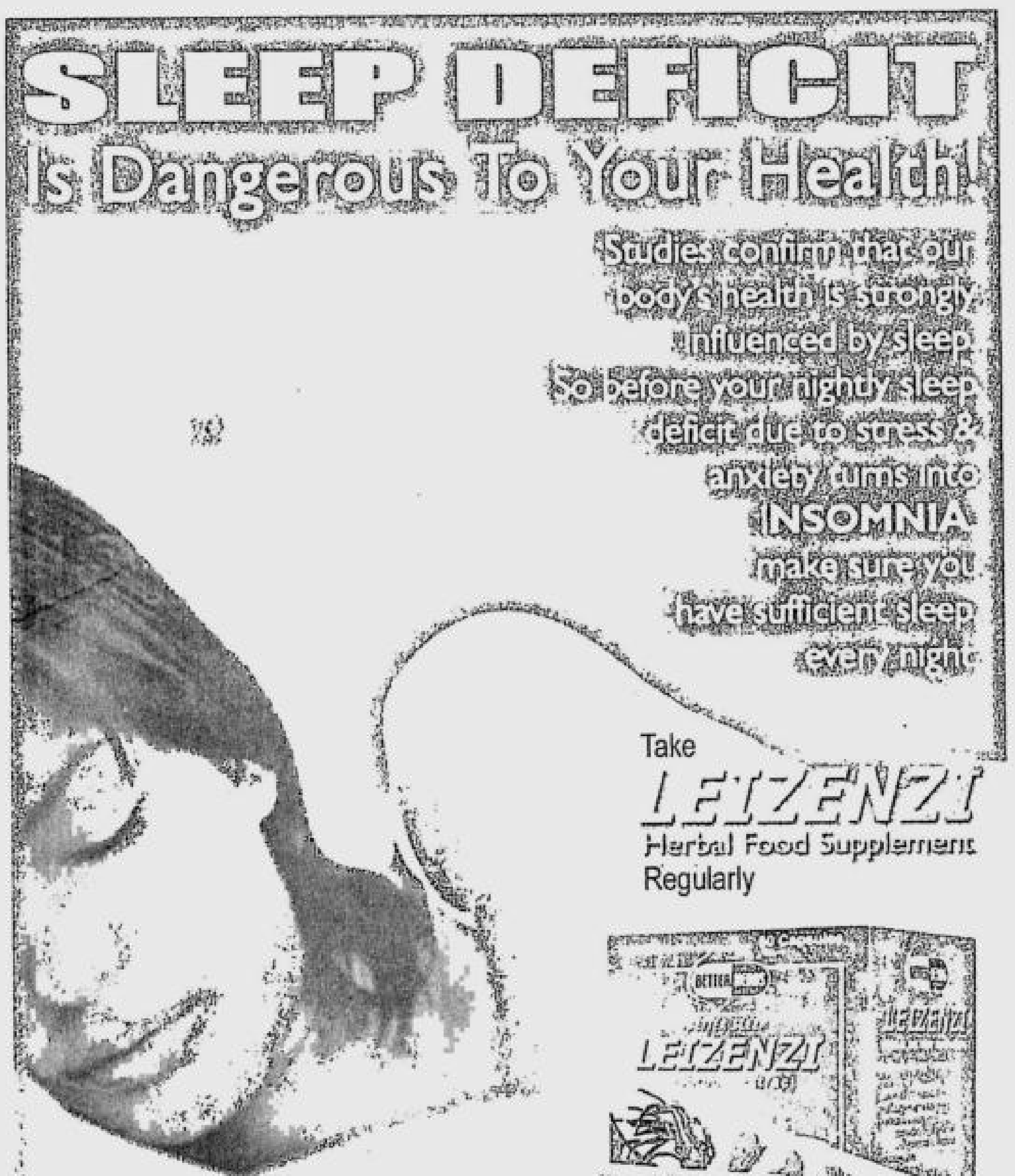

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Land reform issue far from over in Yulo estate

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE FIGHT FOR THE VAST YULO ESTATE in Laguna is far from over as another group of farmers has asked the Department of Agrarian Reform to place some 397 hectares of the family's landholdings in Sta. Rosa town under land reform.

Sikap, a group of around 200 farmers whose families have been tilling the former sugarcane plantation for years, has filed a petition for revocation of the exemption from land reform granted to the Sta. Rosa Realty and Development Corp., a Yulo-owned corporation.

In a petition filed last Dec. 12, Sikap asked the DAR to place under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program 397 hectares of Yulo property in Barangay Sto. Domingo, where the Army's Fort Sto. Domingo and the Laguna Techno Park are located.

Sikap asked the DAR to issue a cease-and-desist order against the Yulos so as "to maintain peaceful possession of the property by the farmer-tillers, actual possessors occupying the [land]."

The farmers said there was "no compelling reason to exempt or exclude any agricultural lands from CARP coverage, citing a certification from the zoning officer of Sta. Rosa saying that 51 of the 397 hectares were still planted to fruit trees.

The DAR exempted 397 of 1,633 hectares of Yulo land in Sto. Domingo from CARP coverage after the local government classified this as industrial land in 1991.

Sikap said another ground for revocation of the order was that the Sta. Rosa Realty and Development Corp. had no personality to file the petition for exemption as it had been dissolved in 2004.

Some 100 farmers trooped to the DAR yesterday to call attention to several other petitions for revocation of exemption of the Yulo properties that have been pending before the DAR.

The DAR has pledged to decide on the petitions before the end of the year.

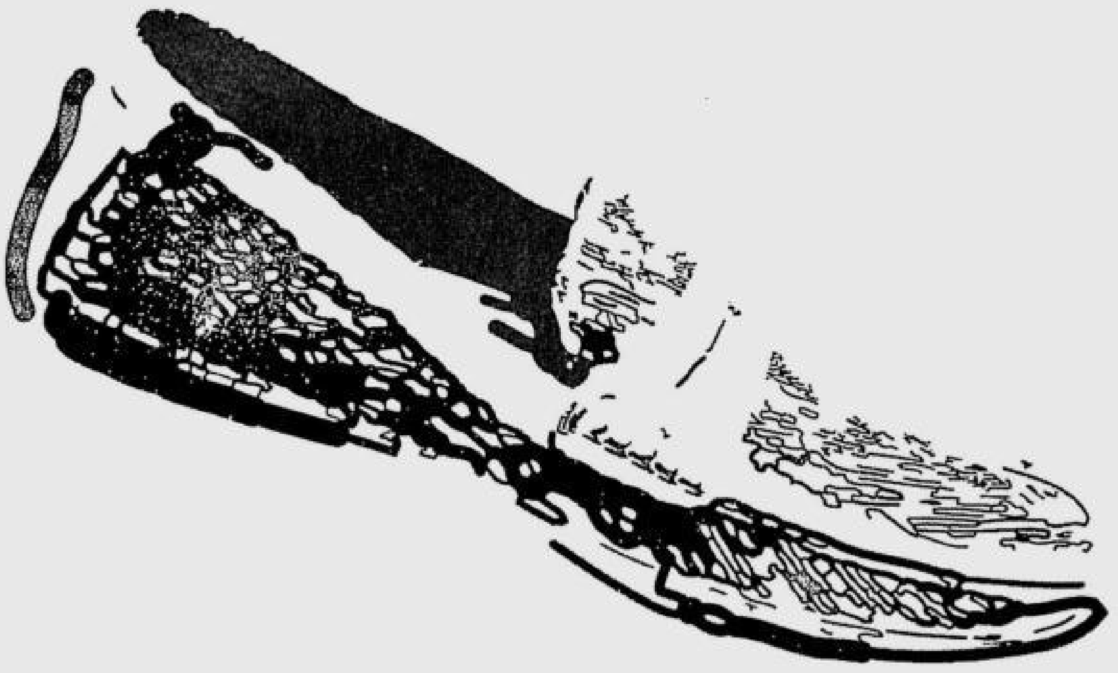
Rolly Petate, secretary general of Samahan ng mga Magsasaka ng Casile-Phase, said at least 42 families were waiting for the decision on their petition seeking a revocation of the exemption of 35 hectares in Barangay Casile in Cabuyao town, yet another part of the Yulo estate.

Another 178 farmers are asking that another 1,300 hectares in Calamba , also owned by the Yulos, be placed under land reform.

The Yulo property, formerly known as the Canlubang Sugar Estate, comprises some 8,000 hectares of land that traverses four municipalities in Laguna province.

The entire estate was a sugar plantation that has since been converted into industrial parks, residential subdivisions, golf courses and other commercial uses.

It is owned by the Yulo clan, one of the biggest landed families in Luzon. The clan patriarch, Jose Yulo Sr. was a former Chief Justice and Speaker of the House of Representatives.



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Conquer your own mountains, Everest climber tells students

GARDUCE: Pursue your passion

By Gerald Gene R. Querubin
Inquirer Southern Luzon

STA. CRUZ, MARINDUQUE—"YOU HAVE your own mountains to conquer," said Mt. Everest summit-climber Romeo Garduce to about 200 college students in this typhoon-ravaged province.

Speaking to students from various colleges here, Garduce encouraged them to pursue their passions, no matter the odds, and to be ready to work hard in order to achieve their goals.

The reknowned Filipino summiteer braved the heavy rains brought about by typhoon Seniang Dec. 9, to grace a seminar entitled "Achieving Goals: The Mt. Everest Experience," sponsored by students from the Marinduque State College and the Santa Cruz Institute.

Garduce emphasized that achieving goals entails sacrifice.

He related to the students his own personal sacrifices, like how he used his hard-earned income to pursue his passion for mountain climbing instead of buying material things.

"I may not have the material things that other people enjoy, but I am happy with what I am doing and I am self-fulfilled," said Garduce.

He said conquering Mt. Everest was not the end of his personal goals and that he was still looking forward to climbing the rest of the "Seven Summits."

In the mountaineering community, the Seven Summits are the seven highest mountains of the seven continents of the world.

Garduce has so far successfully climbed Mt. Everest in Asia, Mt. Aconcagua in South America and Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa. He has also peaked Mt. Cho Oyu, the sixth highest mountain in the world.

"Explore every possibility, but stick to the one that you love most," Garduce advised.

He warned the youngsters that obstacles and hindrances would come their way and these may cause them to lose sight of their goals.

"Be ready to face the hindrances and obstacles, and overcome them. If you become faint-hearted, you may end up saying goodbye to your dreams," added Garduce.

After the seminar, Garduce went to Barangay Landy, one of the heavily damaged villages in this municipality to distribute relief goods.

He also contributed some cash pooled by his peers in the University of the Philippines Mountaineers to the Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office.

"We are grateful that Mr. Garduce visited us. His mere presence is enough to give hope to the victims of typhoons Reming and Seniang," said Joel Recella, social welfare head of Sta. Cruz.

Spanish for OFWs bound for Spain

By Jerome Aning

OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS EYEING jobs in Spain may now avail of training in Spanish language and culture following the signing of an agreement between the labor department and the Instituto Cervantes de Manila, the cultural arm of the Spanish government.

Under the accord, the government and the ICM agree to conduct a Spanish language and cultural orientation program to equip qualified OFWs with the language skills to perform their jobs.

The center will also train call center agents for companies serving Spanish-speaking customers.

The agreement was signed by Labor Secretary Arturo Brion and ICM director Jose Rodriguez.

Call center jobs

"I expect our accord to help train successfully our aspirants for Spanish-language call center jobs at home, as well as to reinforce the welfare of workers under our Pilot Project with Spain as without a knowledge of the Spanish language, there will be no jobs in Spain," Brion said.

"By equipping and jointly certifying our workers on Spanish language skills, we in effect also arm them with protection against the menace of illegal recruiters preying on unsuspecting migrants," he said.

Rodriguez said that Spain was giving importance to the further strengthening of the Spanish language, an international language spoken by 440 million people worldwide.

The DOLE will establish the selection criteria, process and methodology that would ensure suitable levels of qualification and professionalism.

The syllabus to be used by the ICM and other training institutions will be drawn up by ICM and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

ICM will handle, for a reasonable fee to be paid by the workers, Spanish language and cultural training, supply the teachers for the course and conduct the assessment of workers trained in other institutions.

Pay hike for maids

Meanwhile, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration has announced that starting tomorrow, Filipino domestics deployed abroad would get a monthly basic salary of $400 (about P20,000) under new hiring rules adopted last month.

POEA Administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz said that under the new rules, the recruiter will no longer be allowed to collect a placement fee from the applicant and can only charge for the processing of work papers.

All domestics for foreign deployment will have to pass through a training course in language, culture and other skills to be conducted by Tesda under the government's "Super-Maid" program.

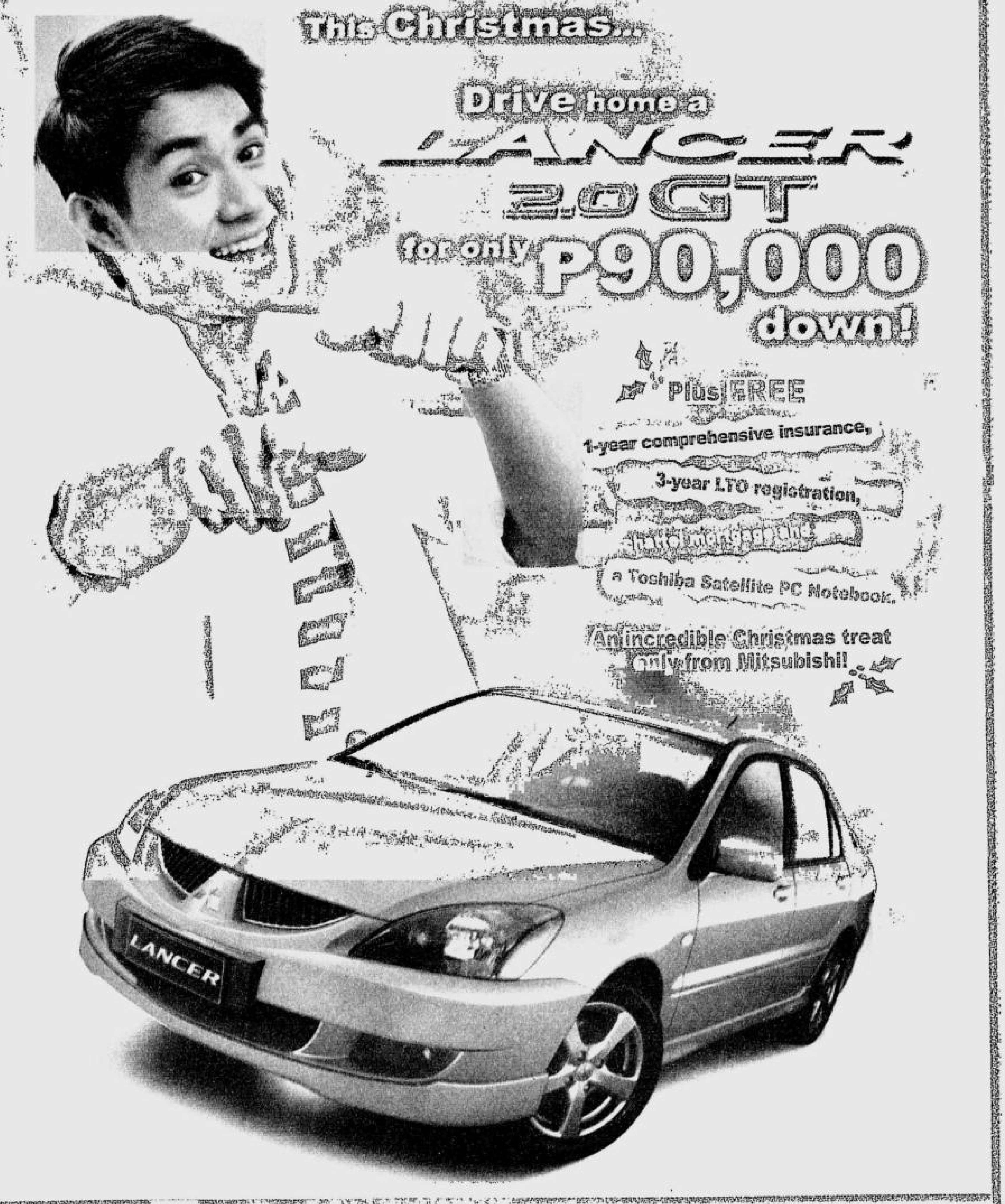
Baldoz said she was studying a petition from various recruitment groups asking that domestics whose job orders were verified and processed before Dec. 16 be exempted from the new rules pertaining to basic pay and the training course.

She said the POEA board was studying whether to allow a brief transition period, until March, before the new rules take effect.

The new hiring rules are meant to secure higher-paying jobs for Filipino domestics and reduce welfare cases involving lowly paid maids.

Some recruiters groups said that without bilateral agreements, the raising of the wage level could cause a decline in maid deployment and the rise of illegal recruitment cases.

Baldoz dismissed the concerns, saying foreign employers would just have to "take it or leave it."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Lancer 2.0 GSR A/T	958,000	90,000	74,454	50,958	40,609	28,940	23,159	19,936	17,954
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GONEGOSYO-PLDT most inspiring OFW entrepreneurs awards

Agnes Leticia Marrero
The mother of all entrepreneurs - Worked for 15 years in HK to help achieve her children's dreams. Now owner of a vacation resort, a dry goods store and a banana plantation in Mt. Province.

Engr. Michael Rasul Abubakar
Engineer for sheltering the homeless in Sulu - After 23 years in Saudi, now owns and manages a construction company to build low-cost housing for his uprooted kababayans.

Dr. Eugenio P. Dayag
The cowboy doctor– Invested savings from medical services in the Middle East to buy a cattle ranch, farm, sugarcane plantation and cassava plantation in Cagayan. He's also the City Health Officer of Tuguegarao City.

Consuelo Valencia
The Cinderella business woman–After 26 years in London, established her own business empire that includes a shipping firm, remittance service, travel service and more.

Norma Macalindong
Ang Don Corleone ng Piazza Mancini—Started her own food shop 6 years ago. With hard work and perseverance, she now lords over her competition in Rome and was recently elected as a *Consiglieri* in Municipio 2 where she represents the migrants community.

Carlos Salinas
Captain of the Maritime Industry—For 27 years, helped establish the Philippines as the number one provider of maritime professionals globally. Helms one of the largest maritime resource management companies in the country.

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Philippine Association of Service Exporters, Inc. (PASEI)
Guardians of OFWs - concerned private employment agencies banded to form PASEI. For more than 25 years now, PASEI has encouraged its member agencies to go beyond their primary role of providing overseas employment and extend their assistance in proffessionalizing the industry which will ultimately lead to the enhancement of service export enterprises.

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> *feed the nation*
> *for a lifetime."*
>
> *- Joey Concepcion*
> *Presidential Adviser on SME*

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"Ang pagnenegosyo ang nagbago sa aming buhay at naging susi sa aming pag-asenso."

Sa darating na December 16, sama-sama nating parangalan ang mga **Inspiring Overseas Filipino Entrepreneurs** sa darating na **GoNegosyo for OFWs at Balikbayans** sa Market! Market! Kilalanin at hirangin natin ang kanilang tagumpay, at gawin natin itong inspirasyon! Pumunta na sa GoNegosyo for OFWs at Balikbayans! May mga premyo, palaro at mga celebrity guests. Libre pa ang entrance! Magsimula na ng sariling negosyo...magsimula na ding magtagumpay!

Day 1 December 15, 2006

10:00 AM - **Opening Ceremonies** • 11:00 AM - **FORUM 1: Ang Kahalagahan Ng Pag-nenegosyo** • 12:00 NN - **Barcelona Movie Launch** • 1:35 PM - **FORUM 2: May "K" Ba Akong Mag-negosyo?** • 2:25 PM - **FORUM 3: Negosyong Namumukod-tangi Para Sa Mga Bagong Bayani** • 4:00 PM - **FORUM 4a: Iba't-ibang Mapagkukunan Ng Perang Pampuhunan** • 4:55 PM - **FORUM 4b: Ating Palaguin Ang Perang Kikitain**• 5:45 PM - **Heart-To-Heart With OFWs** • 6:30PM - **Game Show With Celebrities** • 7:30 PM - **Market! Market! Simbang Gabi**

Day 2 December 16, 2006

10:30 AM - **Go Negosyo Day 1 Highlights** • 11:50 AM - **Awarding of the Inspiring OFW Entrepreneurs** • 12:00 NN - **FORUM 5: Go Negosyo, Negosyanteng OFW! (The Inspiring Entrepreneurs Forum)** • 12:45 PM - **Barcelona Movie Screening** • 2:45 PM - **FORUM 6: Pagpapatakbo ng Negosyo, Habang Ako'y Nasa Ibayo (Running a Long-Distance Business)** • 3:35 PM - **Testimony of Sandy Javier of Andok's Manok** • 3:55 PM - **FORUM 7: Pagpapahalaga Sa Sarili, Pamilya At Bayan; Susi Sa Pangmatagalang Tagumpay At Makabuluhang Negosyo** • 5:00 PM - **PBA Star Players** • 6:00 - **Games** • 7:30 PM - **Market! Market! Simbang Gabi**

Day 3 December 17, 2006

10:30 AM - **Go Negosyo Day 1 and Day 2 Highlights** • 12:00 NN - **Game Show With Celebrities** • 1:00 PM - **Sponsors' Segment** • 3:00 PM - **The Franchise Advantage - The Philippine Franchise Association (PFA)** • 6:00 PM - **Game Show With Celebrities** • 7:30 PM - **Market! Market! Simbang Gabi**

(Business tips, video greetings, raffle prizes, goodies and games in between forums)

MENTORING AREA (GoNegosyo Booth) – Free Business Consultation Sessions!!!

Dec. 15 – Friday (1:00pm to 6:00pm)
Les Reyes (Reyes Haircutters), Lin Deres (Goldilocks), Sonia-Tiong Aquino (UP-ISSI), Merle Alferez (MSA Review Center), Paulo Tibig (Vintel Logistics), Eunice Areola (San Beda), Angie Resurreccion (CEFENET), Johnlu Koa (French Baker), Lloyd Luna (Lloyd Luna Communications), Dr. Rolando Hortaleza (Splash Corporation), Patrick Pasengco (Philippine Vending Group), Dean Danny Cabulay (FEU), Delby Bragais (Delby's Brides)

Dec. 16 – Saturday (1:00pm to 6:00pm)
Leo Riingen (Informatics), Lin Deres (Goldilocks), Tess Ngan Tian (Lots-A-Pizza), Paulo Tibig (Vintel Logistics), Merle Alferez (MSA Review Center), Victor Tan (Babson Jeans), Lloyd Luna (Lloyd Luna Communications), Patrick Pesengco (Philippine Vending Group), Myla Villanueva (MDI Group), Dean Danny Cabulay (FEU), Brian Tenorio (Tenorio Shoes), Ronald Pineda (Folded and Hung)

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2 DA execs charged as Esperat slay brains

By Alcuin Papa

THE CASE OF SLAIN JOURNALIST MARlene Garcia-Esperat has been revived with the Philippine National Police's announcement that it would be filing a new set of murder charges against the alleged masterminds.

The new charges will be filed against Osmeña Montañer, finance officer of the Department of Agriculture in Socsargen, Central Mindanao, and Estrella Sabay, the regional accountant, said Director General Avelino Razon, the PNP deputy director for administration.

Razon, who heads the PNP's Task Force Usig which has been assigned to solve the killings of militants and journalists, said this would be the first time that alleged masterminds of such killings would be charged.

Esperat, a crusading anti-graft journalist, was killed in March 2005 while dining with her children at her home in Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat.

Trio's confession

Last October, a Cebu City judge convicted three men and sentenced them to a maximum of 40 years in jail for the murder.

The trio confessed to the murder, saying they had been hired to kill Esperat because of her exposés on corruption against agriculture department officials in Mindanao.

Shortly after the verdict came down, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez ordered state prosecutors to go after the alleged masterminds, saying that the evidence showed that Esperat had been murdered because of her crusade against "well-entrenched grafters in the DA."

The charges to be filed against Montañer and Sabay are based on a sworn statement of Sgt. Rowie Barua, a soldier assigned as Sabay's security, said private prosecutor Nena Santos.

In his affidavit, Barua said that Montañer and Sabay had paid him and three others P120,000 to kill Esperat.

Clear testimony

"His [Barua's] testimony was clear, direct and categorical that the money was given to them by Montañer and Sabay for the hiring of the assassins. The killing was on the orders of the masterminds," Santos told reporters.

Barua and his family have been placed under the government's Witness Protection Program.

Santos said an administrative case would also be filed before the Supreme Court against Judge Francis Palmones of the Tacurong City regional trial court.

Another set of cases will be filed before the Ombudsman against Cotabato City assistant prosecutor Tocod Ronda for allegedly "whitewashing" the case.

Among the charges to be brought against Palmones and Ronda are obstruction of justice, rendering an unjust judgment, giving an accused unwarranted benefits and advantages in the discharge of their official functions through bad faith, serious misconduct, dishonesty, conduct prejudicial to public service and violations of the Code of Judicial Conduct.

Palmones issued an arrest warrant against Montañer and Sabay May 20, 2005. But the warrants were never implemented.

Charge of venue

At the time, Santos, as counsel for the Esperat family and the Freedom Fund for Journalists, requested a change of venue from Tacurong City to Cebu City "because of the tremendous influence of the accused masterminds in the area."

On July 25, 2005, Palmones issued an order recalling the arrest warrants against the two alleged masterminds, without a hearing, based on a reinvestigation conducted by Ronda.

On Aug. 31, 2005, Palmones dismissed the case against Montañer and Sabay, again without a hearing, saying there was no probable cause.

In November 2005, the Supreme Court transferred the venue of the case to Cebu City.

On Oct. 7, 2006, Cebu City Judge Eric Menchavez convicted Gerry Cabagay, Randy Grecia and Estanislao Bismanos for the murder and acquitted Barua.

But Menchavez denied a motion to reinstate Montañer and Sabay as the accused in the case saying he did not have jurisdiction over them after their names had been struck out by Palmones.

Santos said that because Montañer and Sabay were never arrested and arraigned, there would be no double jeopardy involved with the filing of the new case.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, December 15, 2006
2nd Week of Advent

1st Reading: Is 48:17-19
Gospel: Matthew 11:16-19

Jesus said to the crowds, "Now, to what can I compare the people of this day? They are like children sitting in the marketplace, about whom their companions complain: 'We played the flute for you but you would not dance. We sang a funeral-song but you would not cry!'

For John came fasting and people said: 'He is possessed.' Then the Son of Man came, he ate and drank, and people said: 'Look at this man! A glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet the outcome will prove Wisdom to be right."

Commentary

God is pleading and begging us to listen. If only we would heed God's Word, then God would bend to us, lead us, be our vindication and even our descendants would know the richness and goodness of God. This is the Holy One of Israel!

And Jesus laments and decries his own people: Acting like spoiled children, whining and complaining. We know nothing of the wisdom of repentance or the wisdom of Jesus, the Son of Man. Does Jesus look at us, disgusted and frustrated because we will not listen or obey?

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Bush tells RP to respect VFA pact, says DFA

By Nikko Dizon

US PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush has stressed the need for the Philippine government to abide by the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement in connection with the case of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

"President Bush mentioned the case of [Smith] and said that the Philippine government 'must respect an agreement,'" the DFA said in a statement issued yesterday.

Bush was apparently concerned over Smith's detention at the Makati City Jail and raised the custody issue with Philippine Ambassador to Washington Willy Gaa when the latter presented his credentials to the US President at the White House on Dec. 9.

"Ambassador Gaa informed President Bush that the executive department is one with the US government on the issue and updated him of the actions being undertaken by the Philippine government," the DFA said.

In his ruling on Wednesday dismissing Smith's request that he be returned to US custody, Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon cited Philippine sovereignty.

He said that should Smith be returned to US custody, "the Philippines would have no jurisdiction over the facilities run by the United States/US Embassy/US military authorities, and the Philippine authorities would be deprived of its duty of supervision over the detention of the convicted accused."

Pozon violating VFA; Smith appeals case

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ruling requiring his continued detention at the city jail.

Contrary to legal tenets

Pozon had convicted Smith, 21, of raping the then 22-year-old Filipino woman called "Nicole" at the Subic Bay Freeport on Nov. 1, 2005, and ordered that he be held at the city jail.

On Wednesday, the judge dismissed the soldier's request to be returned to the custody of military authorities at the US Embassy, where he and his three co-accused—since acquitted and flown out of the country—were held for the duration of the trial.

But Smith said Pozon had "engaged in judicial legislation in lending his own suggestions to what is an otherwise clear provision of the VFA [on the detention of charged American servicemen]."

"His act of construing the term 'judicial proceedings' to exclude the appeals process is simply unwarranted and runs contrary to basic legal tenets," the soldier said.

Smith said it was not correct to say that the term "judicial proceedings" did not include the period to appeal just because there was no longer a need for him to appear before the appellate court.

He also said the judge displayed grave abuse of discretion in ruling that Article 5, Paragraph 6 of the VFA applied only to the proceedings in the trial court and no longer after rendition of judgment.

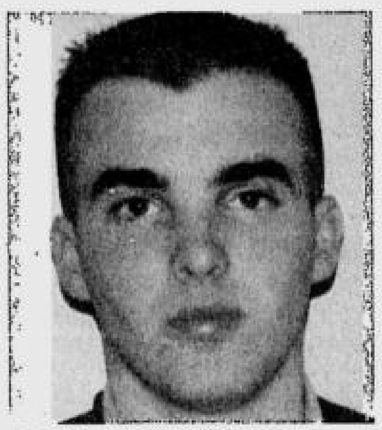
"What is important is that the person of the petitioner remains with responsible authorities in order to ensure that he is produced before the proper Philippine authorities in the event that the trial court's judgment of conviction is upheld by the appellate court and becomes final," he said.

Gov't intervention

The Department of Foreign Affairs through the Office of the Solicitor General is expected to file today a "petition in intervention" backing Smith's petition that he be returned to US custody.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters that the government was "prepared to intervene" in the issue.

"The intervention of the government would be when the private lawyer brings this up before the Court of Appeals," Bunye said.



SMITH

He said he was reiterating what Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the other day, that the government through the DFA would intervene when Smith's lawyers question Judge Pozon's dismissal of the soldier's request for transfer of custody.

Solicitor General Eduardo Antonio Nachura said in a phone interview that lawyers from his office and the DFA were meeting yesterday to discuss Smith's petition.

Nachura had yet to know the outcome of the meeting at press time, but said it was "likely" that the DFA through the OSG would file today "a petition in intervention."

He said that while the DFA was not a party to Smith's case—which, he noted, was a "criminal" case—the government had to intervene on the issue of custody "in accordance with the VFA."

He also said his office was getting involved in the case because the DFA was its client.

Gonzalez's warning

Justice Secretary Gonzalez warned that Pozon's Wednesday ruling was threatening Philippine ties not only with the United States but also with Australia.

The Philippines is finalizing a Security of Forces Agreement with Australia to cover future military exercises between the forces of the two countries, Gonzalez said in an interview.

"With this kind of development, Australia may back out and claim we will not follow [the agreement], anyway," he said.

Gonzalez said that while the VFA imposed "no sanctions," the nonimplementation of the agreement would affect the country's ties with its foreign partner.

US spokesman

"If we cannot respect our treaty obligations, who will expect our country to keep faith with the treaties we sign later on?" he said.

Outraged by Gonzalez's position, militant party-list lawmakers called for his resignation.

Rep. Crispin Beltran of Anakpawis, Rep. Joel Virador of Bayan Muna and Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales of Akbayan also criticized Gonzalez for his disparaging comments against Judge Pozon.

Beltran said Gonzalez was "acting and talking more like a spokesman of the United States" instead of "an official of the Philippine government and speaking out for Filipinos."

He said the justice secretary's "hatred for the Left" had severely impaired his judgment.

"Judge Pozon can do a better job than Gonzalez as justice secretary. At least Pozon's stand on national sovereignty and patrimony is clear and steadfast," Beltran said.

Rosales said the executive branch "should be ashamed of the way it is behaving."

"The [Department of Justice] is essentially saying that Smith should get special treatment even though our local court has found him guilty [of rape]," she said, adding:

"Instead of raising the ambiguity of the VFA provision providing for custody during judicial proceedings, the DOJ is taking hook, line and sinker the line that the VFA is clear and not subject to interpretation, which is what Pozon disagreed with.

Ambiguous VFA terms

"The challenge is to make sure that should the appeal go to the appellate court or the Supreme Court, the same judicial independence is asserted, in stark contrast to the pandering and scrambling of the executive [branch] to protect RP-US relations, or more specifically, military aid."

Virador reiterated his call for the scrapping of the VFA, adding that he and his partymates in Bayan Muna had filed House Resolution No. 1008 seeking the immediate termination of the agreement.

"The ambiguous terms of the VFA provide the US government all the excuses to get the likes of Smith and all future US criminal offenders out of the [reach of Philippine] laws. The case of Nicole is added reason for the VFA to be immediately scrapped," he said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Philip C. Tubeza*

Judge says Constitution, int'l law on his side

From page A1

of the law of the land?" said Pozon, the presiding judge of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 139.

All Pozon would say about Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's comments on his ruling—among others, that his interpretation of the VFA was "wrong," and that his "agenda" was "to please the Left"—was that the latter was "entitled to his own opinion."

Pozon denied on Wednesday the request of Smith, 21, to be returned to US custody pending an appeal of his rape conviction, for which the judge had sentenced him to up to 40 years in jail on Dec. 4.

The ruling set aside the concurrence of the US Embassy, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Justice in the stand that, as stipulated in the VFA, US authorities were entitled to custody of Smith until final judgment on his case.

Smith had invoked the legal protection afforded visiting US troops under the VFA, but the judge ruled that US authorities would no longer need to take custody of the soldier because he would not be required to appear in court during the appeals process.

Philippine supervision

Pozon further said that ruling otherwise would deprive Philippine courts of the "duty of supervision over the detention of the convicted accused under Philippine laws."

Still, he said in the ruling, considering "the country's obligation under the said treaty," he committed Smith to the Makati City Jail (a holding facility for crime suspects facing trial), instead of the National Penitentiary (where ordinary convicts are sent even pending their appeal).

Smith had wanted Pozon to recall his Dec. 4 order committing him to the MCJ.

"All law students know that when there is a conflict between an international treaty and the Constitution, the Constitution prevails when the trial is in a local court. The international agreement would prevail if [the dispute] is before an international court of law," said Pozon, a professor of international, constitutional and political law at his alma mater, the University of the East.

Bouquet of flowers

As Pozon prepared to leave his chambers for an appointment yesterday afternoon, the sectoral group Akbayan gathered in front of Makati City Hall to express appreciation of his ruling.

Led by Akbayan Rep. Etta Rosales, the group of roughly 20 people had wanted to give Pozon a "People's Medal of Valor" for his ruling that, according to the lawmaker, "restored public confidence in the justice system" and awakened Filipino pride.

But Pozon told his staff to tell the group that he was "respectfully declining the offer." A staff member met Rosales at City Hall lobby and accepted a bouquet of flowers she had brought for the judge.

Rosales surmised that Pozon did not want to "make a big thing out of what he did."

She heaped praise on him, saying: "He's a man of conscience, a man of valor, an independent man, a man of integrity."

"He will be remembered by the Filipino people. That is what is most important because he has done true service to the people," she added.

The lawmaker also said she would file a resolution in Congress "articulating our appreciation for [his] courage and valor ... in defending the sovereign rights of the Filipino people and the Filipino nation."

Person of integrity

Judge Jenny Lind Aldecoa-Delorino, also of the Makati RTC, said that in "whatever ruling" Pozon had made, she was confident that it was "based on the evidence and the law."

"Those [political and diplomatic issues surrounding Smith's case] are all extrinsic ... Let politicians take care of that ... He ruled based on the case before him. He is a person of integrity and personality," said Delorino, who recalled meeting Pozon at a judges' conference in Iloilo three years ago and sharing a cab with him even when they were still strangers then.

Before joining the Makati RTC in December 2003, Pozon, 54, was a judge at the Taguig Metropolitan Trial Court. He also worked at the Public Attorney's Office, where he served as counsel for persons who could not afford private lawyers.

The case involving Smith and complainant "Nicole" is his first rape case. In a previous interview, he said he was moved to tears when he was drafting his decision.

"Both of them, the complainant and Smith, are very young. And ... I am also a father, and I also have children, so it's really very hard to decide," said the father of three.

Respect

In his court, records of the rape case—volumes upon volumes of pleadings, documentary evidence and stenographic notes, among others—have been readied for transmittal to the Court of Appeals, where Smith has taken his request to be returned to US custody.

In a statement, Emmi de Jesus, secretary general of the women's alliance Gabriela, said Pozon had earned the respect of women and the Filipino people as a whole.

"We from Gabriela laud another just and pro-women decision from Judge Pozon. His decision that Smith remain with Philippine authorities proves that he has a Filipino heart, unlike some government agencies that have the gall to defend the convicted instead of Nicole," De Jesus said.

According to De Jesus, Pozon's decision was an assertion against the VFA, which "has no respect for women's rights and even for Philippine laws."

She said the DOJ, DFA and Presidential Commission on the VFA betrayed the Filipino people by backing Smith and not the complainant.

"No wonder they do not have the support of the people," she said. "The Arroyo administration has mindlessly kowtowed to the US government against the demands of the nation who supported Nicole." *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

Sy, Tan, Zobel lead Forbes' list of 40 richest Filipinos

From page A1

of $2 billion. He is the patriarch of Ayala Corp., the Philippines' oldest conglomerate, whose business interests include real estate and hotels (Ayala Land Inc.), financial services (Bank of the Philippine Islands), telecommunications (Globe Telecom Inc.), water infrastructure (Manila Water Co. Inc.), electronics and information technology (Integrated Microelectronics Inc. and Azalea Technology Investments Inc.) and automotive (Honda Cars Makati Inc. and Isuzu Automotive Dealership Inc.).

He retired in April and turned over business operations to his two sons.

The magazine also noted the story of John Gokongwei Jr., who ranked sixth on its list of richest Filipinos, with a net worth of $700 million.

After the death of his wealthy father at age 13, Gokongwei peddled thread, soap and candles during World War II. He put up a textile-importing company when he was 19.

At the age of 30, he ventured into food manufacturing and set up Universal Robina Corp. (URC). His empire expanded into what is now JG Summit Holdings Inc., whose subsidiaries include Cebu Pacific Air, Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc., First Private Power Corp., JG Summit Petrochemical Corp., Litton Mills Inc., Robinsons Land Corp., Robinsons Savings Bank, Sun Cellular, United Industrial Corp. and URC.

Gokongwei, 80, retired in 2001. His brother James now serves as chair and chief executive officer of JG Summit, while his son Lance is president and chief operating officer.

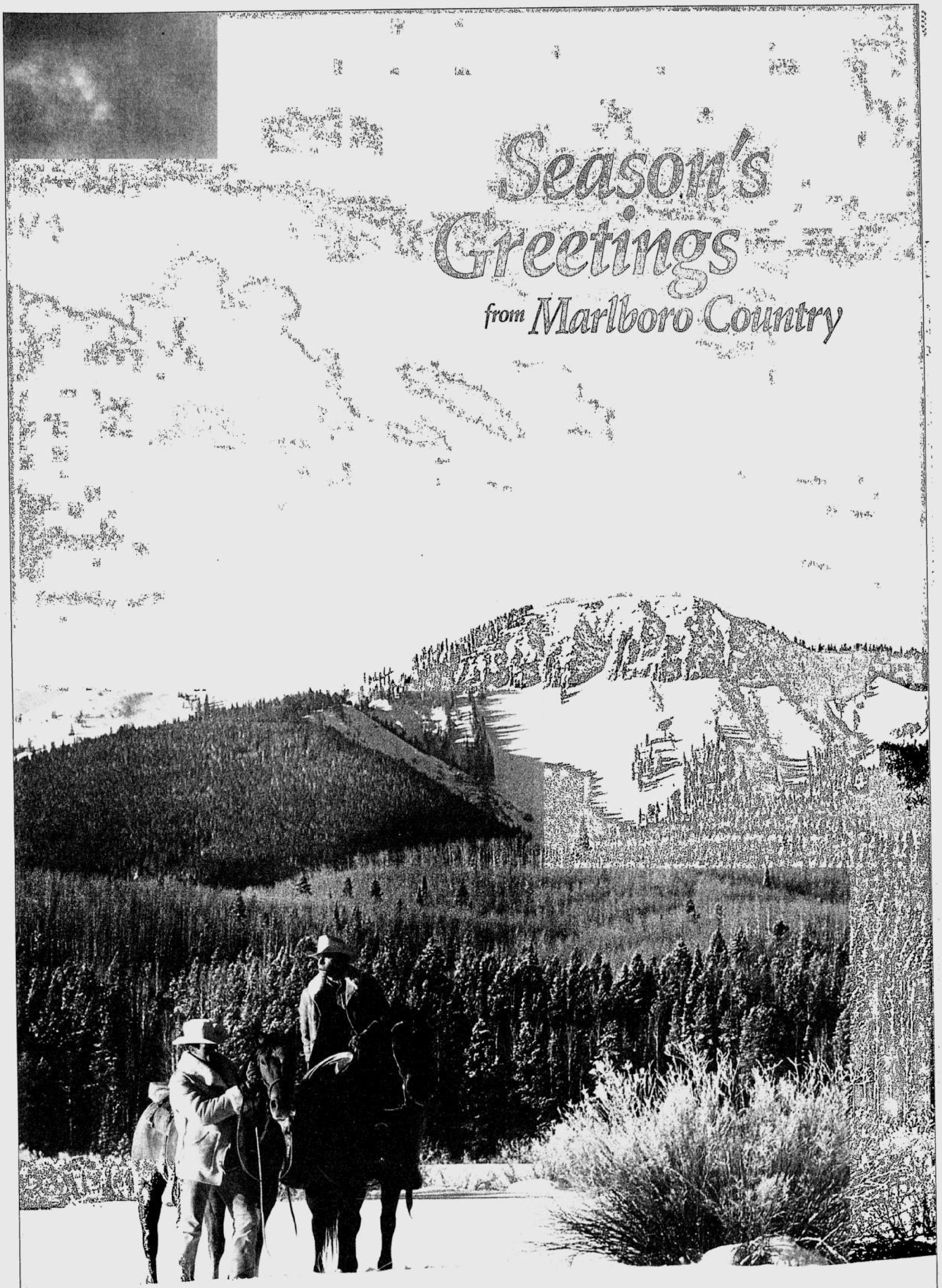
Five women also appear on the list, the richest among them is Beatrice Campos, with a net worth of $160 million. Her late husband, Jose Yao Campos, founded United Laboratories. One of the country's top pharmaceutical firms, Unilab, also provides health care products in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Vietnam. *Reports from AP and Inquirer Research.*

THE TOP 40

GEORGE TY: No. 5

JOHN GOKONGWEI: No. 6

1. Henry Sy - $4 billion
2. Lucio Tan - $2.3 billion
3. Jaime Zobel de Ayala - $2 billion
4. Eduardo Cojuangco - $840 million
5. George Ty - $830 million
6. John Gokongwei Jr. - $700 million
7. Tony Tan Caktiong - $575 million
8. Andrew Tan - $480 million
9. Emilio Yap - $350 million
10. Oscar Lopez - $315 million
11. Enrique Razon Jr. - $285 million
12. Andrew Gotianun - $280 million
13. Enrique Aboitiz - $275 million
14. Alfonso Yuchengco - $225 million
15. Menardo Jimenez - $210 million
15. Gilberto Duavit Jr. - $210 million
17. Ramon del Rosario - $205 million
18. Felipe Gozon - $180 million
19. Beatrice Campos - $160 million
20. Luis J. L. Virata - $150 million
21. David M. Consunji - $145 million
22. Bienvenido R. Tantoco Sr. $140 million
23. Betty Ang - $115 million
24. Manuel Villar - $110 million
25. Mariano Tan - $100 million
26. Rolando & Rosalinda Hortaleza - $90 million
27. Oscar Hilado - $85 million
28. Vivian Que Azcona - $80 million
29. Manuel Zamora - $75 million
30. Magdalerno Albarracin - $73 million
31. Jesus Tambunting - $70 million
32. Frederick Dy - $65 million
33. Tomas Alcantara - $60 million
34. Lourdes Montinola - $50 million
35. Salvador Zamorra - $45 million
36. Antonio Roxas - $40 million
37. Wilfred Steven Uytengsu Sr. - $38 million
38. Philip T. Ang - $35 million
39. Marixi Prieto - $30 million
40. Manuel Pangilinan - $25 million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AI presses police on death squads

By Alcuin Papa

A RANKING EXECUTIVE OF THE international human rights group Amnesty International (AI) met yesterday with police officials investigating the spate of political killings in the country to reiterate their appeal for more government action against "death squads" and vigilantes that have victimized over 300 activists and jounalists in the past five years.

Timothy Parrit, acting deputy director of the AI's Asia-Pacific Regional Programme met on Tuesday with Philippine National Police Deputy Dir. Avelino Razon, who is also chief of Task Force Usig which is looking into the extrajudicial killings, and presented an AI report released last August entitled "Philippine Political Killings, Human Rights and the Peace Process."

The report said "the methodology of the attacks, including prior death threats and patterns of surveillance by persons reportedly linked to the security forces, the leftist profile of the victims and climate of impunity which, in practice, shields the perpetrators from prosecution, has led Amnesty International to conclude that the attacks are not an unconnected series of criminal murders but constitute a politically motivated pattern of killings. The organization remains gravely concerned that members of the security forces may have been directly involved in the killings, or else have tolerated, acquiesced to, or been complicit in them."

For his part, Razon gave the AI executive the initial results of their own investigations which raise the possibility that some of the killings are part of local communist purges.

"The Task Force is conducting exhaustive investigations into the motivations and facts of the killings, based on accounts of witnesses and relatives of the victims," Razon said.

REMEMBERING 'DA KING'
Susan Roces, widow of Fernando Poe Jr. , and their daughter Mary Grace light candles at his tomb inside the Manila North Cemetery on his second death anniversary yesterday.
REM ZAMORA

Temporary water interruption in San Juan and Mandaluyong needed to upgrade facilities

Manila Water is currently upgrading its distribution lines and facilities to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. We regret that we will have to temporarily interrupt water supply in portions of San Juan and Mandaluyong City starting 8:00 p.m., Friday, December 15, 2006, up to 6:00 a.m., Saturday, December 16, due to the interconnection of mainlines. The following areas will be affected: Barangays Corazon De Jesus, Pasadena, Addition Hills, P. Cruz, Batis, Tibagan, Sta. Lucia in San Juan and Barangays Kabayanan and Maytunas in Mandaluyong City.

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(PDI – Dec. 15, 2006)

Sea traffic rerouting eyed

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PUERTO PRINCESA City—There may be no traffic jams here, but accidents can also happen in the vast lanes and millions of lives are at risk.

How about implementing a traffic rerouting scheme at sea?

Regulation

Hoping to protect the constantly threatened rich marine life in our seas, government officials and environmentalists have proposed regulating sea traffic.

The Department of Foreign Affairs is already planning to submit a proposal to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to have the country declared as among the Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSA) in the world, according to DFA Maritime and Ocean Affairs Center secretary general Alberto Encomienda.

The World Wide Fund for Nature in the Philippines said PSSAs are zones "that need special protection because of their ecological, economic, cultural or scientific significance and their vulnerability to harmful impacts from shipping activities."

Ban of tankers

The declaration will lead to the banning of tankers with hazardous cargoes in the country, vessels kept away from protected sites, even requiring ships to have local pilots more familiar with the areas they are to pass through.

The proposal was prompted by the oil spill off Guimaras Island four months ago causing extensive damage to the environment and which showed the various threats on our seas, Encomienda said.

"This (as well as) other unreported isolated oil spills and unmonitored cases of grounding, sinking, collision, fire and capsizing heighten the level of threat that poses pressure and danger to (our seas)," Encomienda added.

"In terms of biodiversity, we have an even greater number than say the Great Barrier Reef (in Australia)," Encomienda also said.

Bumpy ride

The IMO declared the Great Barrier Reef as a PSSA in November 1990. It is one of the only 11 PSSAs declared so far in the world.

The proposal appears to be headed for a bumpy ride, however.

Foreign countries whose vessels pass through our waters would surely block any attempt to regulate sea traffic, Encomienda said.

Freedom

"The (country) stands at the crossroads of the busiest sea lanes in the world which account for more than half of the world's maritime traffic," he pointed out in a paper he presented to government officials and environmentalists joining a conference here on the protection of the Tubbataha Reefs and the Sulu Seas.

In the end, it would boil down to freedom to navigate (and the promotion of business) weighed against the need to protect nature, he told the INQUIRER.

Oil spills

But the risk of oil spills is not the only reason those hoping to protect marine life would like to see better control of sea traffic.

Passing ships also leave behind solid wastes, some of which are swept by strong currents into protected areas like the Tubbataha Reefs, a sanctuary of hundreds of marine species.

"Manta rays are already eating plastics," Tubbataha Management Office manager Angelique Songco said.

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Extra income to help stop midwives' exodus

BAGUIO CITY—Alarmed by the exodus of doctors and nurses who find lucrative jobs abroad, reproductive health advocates want to provide additional income to midwives to encourage them to stay.

Eden Divinagracia, executive director of Philippine Non-Government Organization Council on Population Health and Welfare, said in a forum on Tuesday that midwives could earn extra money by promoting the government's vaccination program.

She said the program gives midwives compensation or commission from every vaccination shot, thanks to the support from pharmaceutical companies.

The average income of a government midwife is P10,000, including benefits, said Patricia Gomez, president of the Integrated Midwives Association of the Philippines. The entry salary for a new midwife is from P7,000 to P8,000 a month.

But more attention is being given to midwives because they are the only members of the medical community who remain active in the provinces, while more doctors and nurses land overseas jobs, Divinagracia said.

"The midwives are the ones left behind, that is why we are talking about the bulk of work they are [left] doing right now in the field," Gomez said.

The law does not require midwives to handle additional medical duties "but they are the only health practitioners who are out there," she said.

Gomez said midwives tend to become more attached to the community they are serving despite the low compensation.

"Money is not everything to us, what matters most is our community service," Lolita Dicang, a Baguio midwife, said. *Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

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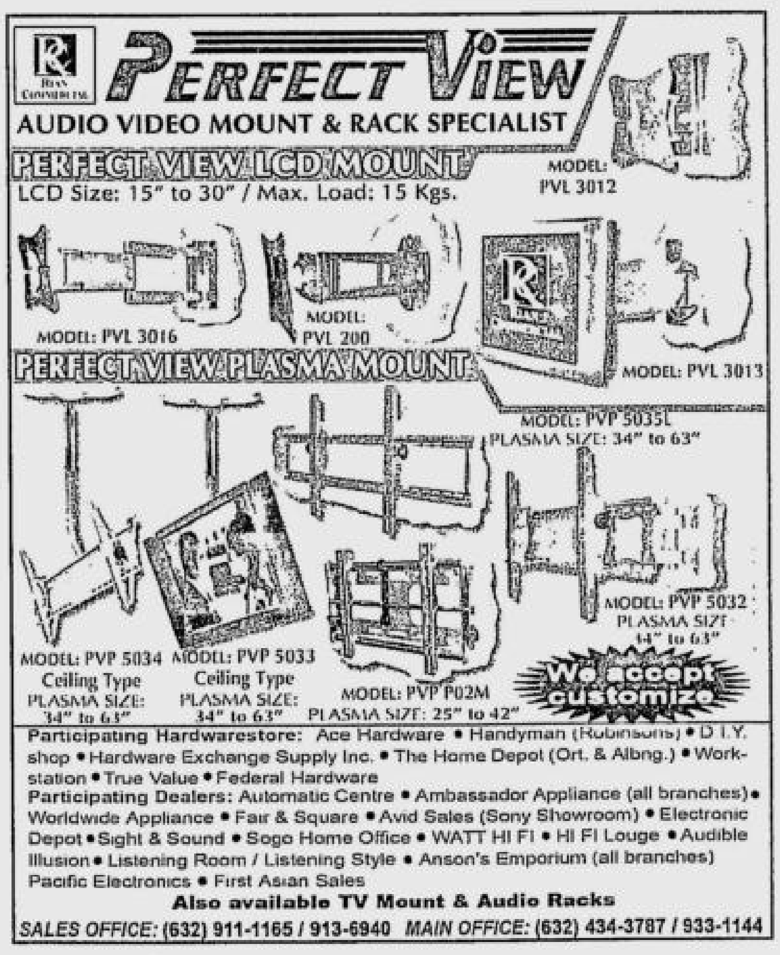
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RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

Esperon clears 2 officers at start

From page A1

pa and Hizon of any participation in the alleged plot to withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo in February.

On Nov. 20, Esperon ordered that 30 officers led by Miranda, Lim and Marine Col. Ariel Querubin be court-martialed.

At the same time, the AFP chief of staff cleared eight other officers—two Marine officers and six Scout Ranger officers.

No evidence

"It is determined that there is no prima facie evidence against Lieutenant Colonels Gualdrapa and Hizon," read Esperon's memo, which ordered Allaga to issue an order to release the two from detention in Fort Bonifacio and to restore them to active duty status as soon as possible.

Esperon apparently overlooked the fact that Gualdrapa retired on Nov. 2. In fact unlike the rest of the accused, he was not in his military uniform at yesterday's hearing.

Col. Pedro Herrera-Davila, Esperon's Staff Judge Advocate who reviewed the pre-trial investigation (PTI) report on the case, said he received the memo at 10 p.m. on Wednesday and that he was ordered to personally deliver the memo to the court yesterday.

Not a motion, but an order

Defense lawyers said the trial could not proceed without formally amending the charge sheet.

"This is not a motion. This is an order from the convening authority (Esperon). This is a prerogative of the convening authority so this court has to follow that order," Col. Marian Aliedo, the only lawyer among the seven-member military court, told the defense lawyers, as the court ordered Gualdrapa and Hizon's release.

The defense lawyers also heatedly questioned why they were not given copies of the pre-trial investigation report, which supposedly recommended the dismissal of charges against 20 of the 38 officers investigated.

"It's quite irregular. We never received the order of indictment that was reconsidered by General Esperon. We don't know what this charge sheet is based on," said Teddy Rigoroso, who represents Maj. Francisco Fernandez and 1Lt. Belinda Ferrer of the Marines.

Alfredo Castel, counsel of Army 1Lt. Ervin Divinagracia, said military prosecutors never bothered to furnish them a copy of the PTI report or of the pre-trial advice (PTA) that was supposedly Esperon's basis for ordering the trial.

Lt. Col. Ukol Paglala, the lead prosecutor, insisted that the PTI report was "not necessary" to proceed with the trial. He even said the report was considered "privileged communication."

'Mental dishonesty'

"Do you mean to say that the Chief of Staff can just file a case against anyone as he wants to, at his caprice and whim?" Castel asked.

Maj. Serme Ayuyao, one of the prosecutors, defended the decision to withhold the PTI report, citing a 1991 Supreme Court ruling on the Jose Comendador v. Renato de Villa coup d'etat case.

Ayuyao said the high court ruled that a trial could proceed even if there was no pre-trial investigation.

"That is mental dishonesty," countered Trixie Cruz-Angeles, who represents Army Capt. Ruben Guinolbay.

She said that in that particular case, the accused officers did not avail themselves of a pre-trial investigation.

"In our case, we participated in a pretrial investigation but we were not given a copy of the report," she said.

Paglala instead challenged the defense lawyers: "Why don't you go to the Supreme Court?"

"Why are you so afraid to give us that report?" said Vicente Verdadero, Lim's lawyer.

Heated arguments

"We cannot allow this fast break to continue ... How can we defend our clients when we don't even have the PTI report?" said Abraham Espejo, counsel for Army Lieutenant Colonels Nestor Flordeliza and Edmundo Malabanjot.

Many of the lawyers asked that the convening of the military court be postponed so they could prepare a "peremptory challenge" to eject the court members.

After three hours of heated arguments, Marine Lt. Col. Achilles Segumalian's

THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST: Leaders of the alleged
left, ex-Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miran
Querubin and Col. Orlando de Leon.

FLORDELIZA

JOAN BONDOC

EMOTIONAL MOMENTS, like this one between Lt. Col. Nestor Flordeliza and his daughter, echo the sentiments between all the other accused and their loved ones.

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# of court-martial

coup plot have their first day in court in Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal. From
da, ex-Scout Rangers commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, Marine Col. Ariel

JOAN BONDOC

officers were handcuffed, like the bemedalled Capt. Ruben Guinolbay
they are brought to an Army courtroom for the start of court-martial
gs. They are accused of plotting to overthrow the Arroyo administration in

JOAN BONDOC

d pose a "peremptory challenge" rt members, saying military au- violated the court-martial rules rocess when they withheld the

ned till Jan. 11

urt, however, rejected the chal- adjourned the proceedings un-

those on trial are bemedalled officers, including Lt. Col. Custodio Parcon and Querubin—recipients of the coveted Medal of Valor, the military's highest combat medal, for their bravery in combat against extremist groups in Mindanao.

Also on trial is Capt. Ruben Guinolbay, dubbed hero of the siege of Lamitan, Basilan, in June 2001 against Abu Sayyaf bandits. He won a Gold Cross Medal, the military's third highest honor.

LTY: Even before the court-martial process could get going on Thursday, of Staff Esperon announces the acquittal of Lieutenant Colonels Valentin nter) and Romulo Gualdrapa (left).

JOAN BONDOC

Marines arrive in air-conditioned vans, Scout Rangers in open Army trucks

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

BEFORE THE START OF THE COURT-MARTIAL proceedings yesterday, there was a glaring disparity in the treatment of the Marine and Scout Ranger officers.

The Scout Rangers officers, who are detained in a maximum security facility in Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal, were brought in in open Army trucks. They proceeded to the courtroom handcuffed to an escort.

Ex-Scout Ranger chief Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, however, was brought in a separate vehicle and was not handcuffed.

Army Capt. Dante Langkit, a former Scout Ranger member, was brought in a separate vehicle from the Fort Bonifacio Intelligence and Security Group compound where he is detained. He has lost a lot of weight.

In contrast, the Marines were brought in from Fort Bonifacio and Fort San Felipe in Cavite City in air-conditioned vans. They were neither handcuffed nor closely escorted.

Some of them were even able to go out of the courtroom unescorted during breaks, while the Rangers had to be escorted even when they went to the restroom.

Only Marine Col. Januario Caringal was not present, as he remains confined at a hospital in Fort Bonifacio due to hepatitis.

The officers used the court breaks to chat with fellow officers and family members to catch up on news about one another.

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Eager beavers

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAUL GONZALEZ MAY INVOKE the name of the president of the United States all he wants, but that's beside the point. Philippine and American jails are crowded with convicts waiting for their appeals to be heard, and they aren't kept in jails that are different from where they will be detained if they lose.

EDITORIAL

Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Benjamin Pozon is being unfairly portrayed as an unreasonable man. He penned a six-page decision released Wednesday that said the proper place to detain Marine Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith is not the US Embassy. Instead, Pozon declared, the American soldier sentenced to 40 years for rape ought to remain in a regular Philippine jail until the appropriate Philippine and American authorities formally agree on a detention facility under the terms of the Visiting Forces Agreement. That facility should be under Philippine jurisdiction, the judge added.

We cannot attribute to American officials anything more than they are willing to tersely say in public. What they have signified is that they disagree, respectfully enough, with the judge's view and his orders. There have been the usual signals of displeasure, which could affect future relations between the two nations. Such a position and such statements are not only par for the course, but are the obligation of American diplomats tasked with looking after the interests of their citizens.

For all we know, American concern has been sparked not so much by the Smith verdict—because whether acquitted or convicted, Smith's career in the US Marines would have been ruined because he disgraced the corps—but because either the Filipino legal team defending Smith or Philippine officials gave the US Embassy an impression, perhaps even assurances, that haven't been matched by reality.

This is the only way to explain why Gonzalez is so stubbornly, even ferociously, veering close to contempt of court in his behavior and statements. And why Philippine officials, whether in the Department of Foreign Affairs or the Department of Justice seem to be falling over themselves not to promote Philippine interests but to prove their eager-beaver status to the US ambassador.

The US Embassy believes the termination of the legal process comes when the Supreme Court decides on Smith's appeal. Pozon thinks otherwise, and we think most Filipinos with any familiarity with our justice system would agree with him. The judge has also clearly outlined what is permissible as a subject for negotiation, and what is non-negotiable. Pozon himself pointed out that the two governments can figure out where Smith should be detained, but what cannot be discussed is any detention facility that's not on Philippine soil.

The VFA recognizes that for crimes committed against Filipino, US servicemen should face their accusers in the local courts. In return, the Philippine government grants certain concessions to reassure Americans the accused will be safe and accorded due process. There are provisions in the agreement that are either ambiguous or remain to be fleshed out. Our executive departments—justice and foreign affairs, in particular—must operate within the parameters of Philippine interests, respect for our legal system, and the maximum leeway given to asserting Philippine sovereignty.

So let both parties come to the negotiating table now, but without our own panel of negotiators trying to out-American the Americans in asserting the US government's point of view. The United States will not find itself lacking in willing attorneys to fight for the American position; and it has nothing to fear in terms of reckless behavior either on the part of our judges, our penal officials, or even the public. What it has to fear is the eager beaver mentality of its own friends in official circles.

We would have expected our government to immediately begin serious, and dignified, negotiations to clarify the points of disagreement concerning the VFA. And then to work sincerely, honestly and transparently to find a solution that reassures America without selling our justice system down the river. It's not too late for that.

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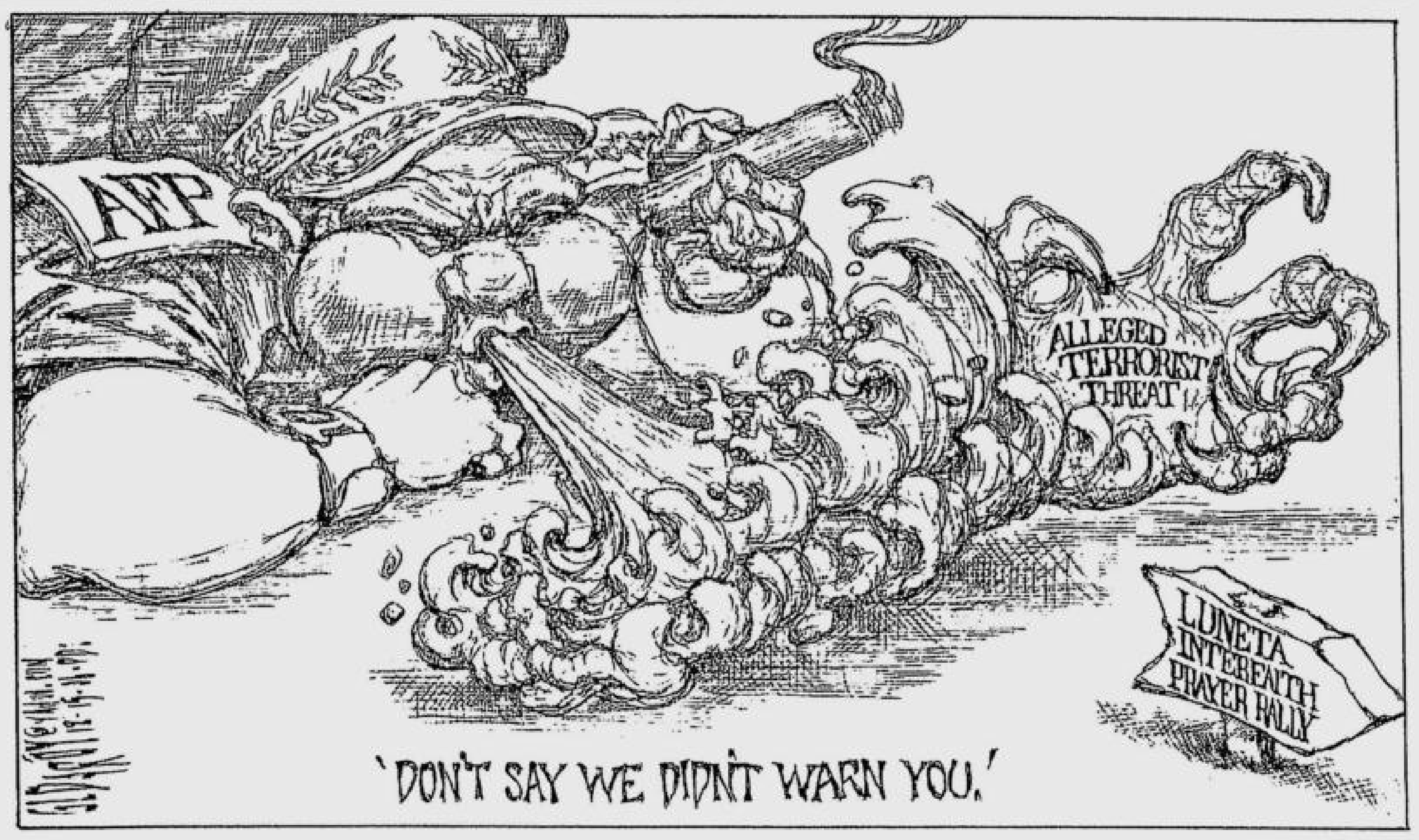
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Our own most hated/distrusted list

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE SOCIAL WEATHER STATIONS HAS REported the continued drop in the satisfaction ratings of President Macapagal-Arroyo. Its latest survey showed that more people are dissatisfied with GMA now than in the previous survey.

I couldn't believe it, so I conducted my own private poll (whose accuracy, by the way, I cannot guarantee) on who are the most hated and most distrusted public officials in the Philippines. I am happy to report that it is not GMA who ended at the top. Speaker Jose de Venecia won it hands down. GMA is several slots below.

The poll was conducted right after the Con-ass fiasco in the House of Representatives where JDV was the mastermind. GMA had already beaten a hasty retreat when the collective wrath of the people threatened to sweep her off Malacañang in another people power. That is probably why GMA was no longer the most hated and most distrusted at the time of the poll.

Following close behind JDV in the most hated/distrusted poll are Albay Representatives Luis Villafuerte and Edcel Lagman. Asked why they hated their congressmen so much, a Bicolano said:

"We're dying and suffering and hungry here, without homes or food, and where were our congressmen when we needed them most? They were in Manila running the Cha-cha railroad through the House that would benefit only themselves and their fellow politicians."

"Didn't lift a finger to help their constituents. Didn't even inquire how we were coping," added another Bicolano.

Following Villafuerte and Lagman in the most hated/distrusted list are the two prosperous Prosperos, Nograles and Pichay. These two were among the most busy and vocal defenders of Cha-cha, or what may be called, in communist lingo, as JDV's "running dogs." Nograles, the House majority floor leader, kept his fellow con-asses in line, while Pichay ranged the news forums and television talk shows to preach the need for and advantages of Cha-cha.

One step behind the two Prosperos in the most hated/distrusted poll is fellow Con-ass Rep. Douglas Cagas who lectured the citizens paying their salaries and watching the House proceedings from the gallery reserved for them that they were mere guests there. "You are not even congressmen," Cagas had barked at them.

Next comes Con-ass Rep. Constancio Jaraula, chair of the House committee on constitutional amendments, whose dogged loyalty to JDV cannot be questioned. Jaraula's runner-up position can be traced to his amendments in the proposed Constitution which were so self-serving and greedy that though they warmed the hearts of administration con-asses, they also angered the citizens.

The first non-congressman in the most hated/distrusted list is, ironically, somebody who should have the trust of everybody because he is the spokesman of the President: Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. There is something strange in him. When he says something, people believe the truth is the opposite. When he says the sky is blue, people believe it is yellow. When he says GMA is lily-white, people believe her heart is hell-black.

Maybe the reason is that when Bunye gives statements to reporters, he has a pained expression that seems to say he is embarrassed to be forced to say those things.

"Have you noticed?" said one reporter in the survey. "When he answers questions from the press, he can't even look you straight in the face."

"Why don't you believe what he says?" I asked.

"Because what he says is so different from reality," he replied. "They are very transparent lies."

The other Cabinet members behind Bunye in the most hated/distrusted list are the two Gonzalezes, Justice Secretary Raul and National Security Adviser Norberto. Their places in the list were no doubt secured by the warning of Raul to all government employees not to join the massive protest rally on Sunday, and by the penchant of Norberto of finding a subversive in every cranny.

Next on the list is Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita. Ermita is running neck and neck in the believability test with Bunye. He has been briefing reporters more and more lately, maybe because they have finally realized that Bunye's credibility is zilch, zero. But Ermita's answers are often like Bunye's—far from reality—so his credibility has gone down. If it is his mug that is flashed in the car advertisement asking "Will you buy a car from this man?" car sales would plummet.

Close behind is Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor who has been vying with Ermita and Bunye in the noise level. Defensor likes to call newsrooms to give tips and leaks, maybe because he would need the media's help when he runs for senator, so that Ermita had to tell him to "shut up."

"Mike leaks more than the Maynilad pipes," quipped one Malacañang insider.

I will end the list there because I'm running out of space. I know there are many more who deserve to be in the most hated/distrusted list, so if you have a candidate, don't hesitate to call so their distrust rating can be weighed against those of others.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKES: The Con-ass fiasco in the House of Representatives has generated many jokes about congressmen. The most popular is the one about congressmen being made to serve two terms: one in office and the other in jail.

This one is the runner-up: Our congressmen's brains have two sides: the left side which has nothing right, and the right side which has nothing left.

The death of a gov't lawyer

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

I HAVE WRITTEN IN THE PAST ABOUT THE unabated killings of activists and journalists in this dark period of impunity, but writing about the death of lawyer Nestor Ballacillo is particularly difficult. I knew Nestor as a colleague and as a friend, and with his cold-blooded murder on Dec. 6, the larger national tragedy became personal and struck straight at the heart.

I met Nestor when we were both delegates to a month-long meeting in Rome to create what we now call the International Criminal Court, which was established ironically to punish precisely the sort of dastardly assault that ended Nestor's life. He represented the Office of the Solicitor General and, by now, you might have come across testimonials about his professionalism and dedication to his work.

He and his son Benedict Paul left their Parañaque residence early that morning, and after alighting from a tricycle at the village gate, two assailants approached them. Witnesses heard gunshots, and saw Nestor and Benedict sprawled on the ground. They were one-half of the family, the remaining half being Nestor's widow Lulu and daughter Bernadette.

His boss, the respected Solicitor General Antonio Eduardo Nachura, said Nestor was called "Obispo" in the office, both for his rectitude and religious devotion. I smile sadly as I write this, because a sacred "Obispo" indeed Nestor was in life. Class valedictorian at Arellano Law School and now an assistant solicitor general, he was so committed to his work that, as his body was about to be dressed up at the *funeraria*, his wife had to take a cab to the OSG. Apparently, he kept his best barongs in the office!

Let me add my own small vignette about him—nothing dramatic, nothing more than a snippet of a passing conversation many years back, but which I remember distinctly to this day. When the International Criminal Court was finally approved and we were all at Rome's Fiumicino airport, I noticed Nestor struggling with giant law books as we checked in for our flights. The delegates had been furnished these thick volumes as references during the drafting, and Nestor was bringing home two sets, one for himself and the other for the OSG library. I asked him, in the fatigue and frenzy of an airport queue: Are you really bringing those encyclopedia volumes as hand-carried luggage? His reply was plain and straightforward. This is the least I can do for my office, he said, because the OSG has been so good to me and my career, and it's just a small token of thanks.

At his wake, my wife and I had to close our eyes tight in prayer as we stood before his coffin, because he had been shot in the head at close range so that his face, reconstructed, no longer captured the Nestor we knew.

The latest development is that President Macapagal-Arroyo has upped to P1 million the reward money, on top of the P200,000 that had earlier been offered by the Southern Police District. I hope the reward will bring out informants out there, who can push forward the investigation.

The Ballacillo family has issued a statement that Nestor had no personal enemy and that their family was not involved in any personal or property dispute. I believe them. Nestor was so kind-hearted, soft-spoken, a consummate professional, the epitome of simple living. The police have ruled out theft; his son's cell phone and wristwatch had not been taken, and Nestor took two bullets, one in the head and another in the body, superfluous for petty thieves out for a quick heist.

It had to be the cases that he was handling, and Nestor had his share of high profile and intensely contested cases. Indeed, there is an eerie coincidence that both Nestor and Pasay Regional Trial Court Judge Henrick Gingoog, who was gunned down on Dec. 30 last year, worked as counsel and as judge, respectively, on the litigation over Naia Terminal 3.

Have you ever wondered what goes on in the minds of those who plan out these deaths? Or by even wondering, do we not credit too much rationality to evil minds? Why would anyone wish to hurt Nestor Ballacillo? Was it to punish him, say, for doggedly persisting on certain legal positions? Frankly, I do not think Nestor would have changed his legal analysis even under pressure. He was too much of the stickler to rules, and I cannot imagine him buckling down and espousing a view that he honestly thought to be wrong. It just wasn't him.

So was it to send a message? If so, to whom? To the rest of the Office of the Solicitor General? Or, with the killing of a human rights lawyer in Huban, Sorsogon, to the rest of the legal profession?

Once again, I recall the killings and disappearances when we were under martial law. Their chilling effect lingered for a while, but it took the killing of Ninoy Aquino, the image of his body lying on the airport tarmac, to shake the nation out of its lethargy. I suppose the still unknown masterminds wanted to eliminate Ninoy as a threat, a rival claimant, to the throne that the ailing Marcos was expected soon to yield.

But what we got was a rather different message: If they can do this to Ninoy, they can do it to any one of us. If they dared execute a prominent, internationally known former senator of the Republic, would they think twice before hurting ordinary citizens?

The effect was even more unexpected: the nation ended up not cowed into silence but emboldened into action.

We await the historic "tipping point."

I bid farewell to a friend "with the still soul ... for beneath the dashing, noisy waves must ever run the silent waters that give the tide its course."

(Comments to passionforreason@gmail.com)

An interloper and usurper

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

A PRESS CONFERENCE CALLED BY SPEAKER Jose de Venecia last week on constitutional change turned into a fracas between INQUIRER business columnist Victor Agustin and militant leftist activist Renato Constantino Jr. The incident, in which Agustin doused a glass of cold water on the face of Constantino, became a media event—a cause célèbre—that underlined how contentious the issue of constitutional change is even among journalists.

A few facts have to be established. A press conference is a long-standing institutional forum in which members of the press carry out informed dialogue with the official and private sectors for the purpose of clarifying issues involving the public interest. The press conference is a confrontational interaction between journalists and sources of information, giving life to the notion of adversarial relations between them.

Constantino is not a member of the press. Press conferences have their own ground rules for civilized discourse between protagonists. Constantino crashed the conference at Dusit Hotel as an uninvited guest out to create trouble. He had absolutely no business being there. He was an interloper.

Luckily for him, press conferences do not hire bouncers who would have summarily thrown him out of the premises for creating public disturbance. Not only did he gate-crash. As soon as he entered the room, he charged like a raging bull with a harangue of name-calling denouncing De Venecia and House leaders for pushing for a constituent assembly, without Senate participation. Constantino said: "I am completely appalled by your collective gall. You are totally bereft of principles, that's why you are without shame." He said the House leaders were a "disgrace to the nation."

When reminded by Rep. Luis Villafuerte, "You have a right to ask a question but not to berate anybody," Constantino said, "I have a right to be here. As a private citizen I believe I have the right to say what I feel."

With his rampage, Constantino converted the press conference into a rowdy political rally, a Plaza Miranda *miting de avance*, an Edsa people power mob-rousing platform that had nothing to do with expanding public knowledge of critical public issues. He hijacked it as a forum for dispensing polemical drivel.

Constantino is at home in the politics of the streets. He excels in shouting matches that pass for reasoned arguments. In his street militancy, Constantino is used to being hosed down by anti-riot water cannons, a treatment to calm him down that is less gentle than the splash of cold water administered by Agustin like baptismal water poured on the head of a child being christened.

Agustin said he was offended by Constantino's invasion of the press conference as the precinct for interchange of ideas. Of course, he was mad, said Agustin, "He was boorishly hotheaded and he didn't want to stop. So he needed a douse of cold water."

Other journalists in the conference were so offended by Constantino's harangue that they jumped in to stop Constantino from completely taking over the conference.

Constantino did not attack Agustin verbally. He reserved his venom for the allies of De Venecia. So, it has been argued, Agustin had no reason to take things into his hands by using the water cure, which was deemed to be a provocative act.

But Constantino was even more provocative in launching his tirade at the press conference.

Some journalists derided their colleagues for jumping into the fray, and reminded them about the rights of citizens to "free expression." The incident is mistakenly represented as a case of free speech, which it is not. It is a case of abuse of free speech. No citizen has a right to slander people whose views they don't agree with.

Agustin is being disciplined by his employers with suspension for his behavior. The incident does not involve any issue of freedom of expression breached by Agustin, his competence or ethics as a journalist. What is involved is his reaction to extreme provocation and abuse of the privilege of the conference as a mechanism for informed press-official dialogue on important public issues.

Political institutions, like Congress, have their own ground rules for conducting informed discourse, and the press has its own rules for an orderly exchange of ideas and the press conference is one such mechanism. Street activists sometimes transfer the chaotic ways of their mob politics to the more orderly venue to bring out the truth, using a question and answer method.

Constantino did not ask questions. He was not looking for answers. He inflicted his views and was not contradicted. His harangue was a monologue of abuse.

The streets are wide open for Constantino and his likes. They can exercise their abuse there, but then they can be held responsible for breaking the law not only for calumny and slander but also for inciting to sedition, if they go further in the violence of their language. In the streets, they have to contend with more stern reactions than the water cannon and they run the risk of having their heads broken by riot police truncheons. When they are outraged over things they don't like, they are not welcome in the precincts of the press conference where the most violent reaction they get is a splash of cold water on their heads. Journalists don't bust the heads of those who don't agree with them. But they also want their institutions respected.

Gender and the courts

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"SOCIETIES GENERALLY ARE NOT KIND TO VIOlated women, exposing them to ridicule and shame when they report their having been violated. Rape victims bear the responsibility of proving that they have been raped, that they had not invited seduction, or had not been unchaste. The process of bearing the burden of proof can cause deep, and in some cases, irreparable emotional damage on the victims and the people around their lives. On the other hand, the harsh hand of social injustice does not seem to apply to the rapists."

The above is a quote not from some feminist handbook but from a decision of the Philippine Supreme Court, written by former Supreme Court Justice Abraham Sarmiento in the case People vs. Muñoz, issued in 1988.

Coming as it did nine years before the Anti-Rape Act of 1997, which re-classified rape as a crime against persons and no longer against chastity, the decision "created a positive development in jurisprudence by no longer classifying rape as an act of lust ... but as 'the ultimate expression of contempt for women.'"

As the authors of the book "Engendering the Philippine Judiciary" point out: "The problem with classifying rape as a crime against chastity is that chastity, which is interpreted to mean virginity or purity, will come into play as an element in making decisions. It then puts the erroneous and unfair burden on the complainant to prove that she is chaste, rather than focusing on the criminal act of the accused, even if chastity was not an element in the crime. Using the same requirement, and perpetuating the myth that only 'good' and chaste women can be raped, the courts fall in the trap of stereotyping credible rape victims as only those who belong to the image of a 'Filipina of good repute' and the demure 'Maria Clara' type, or those who come from 'good families.'"

* * *

INDEED, stereotypes die hard, and despite years of research, scholarly study and jurisprudence, many Filipino judges—and the Filipino public—still play the game of "blame the victim," and demand high moral standards and chaste behavior from a woman before they believe her story of rape.

Even after People vs. Muñoz established that rape is not a crime of lust, subsequent decisions by the Supreme Court itself, as a review noted, "showed inconsistency and its failure to end once and for all the myths and misconceptions about rape, as a result of which they continue to pervade Philippine jurisprudence and are copied by undiscerning trial judges."

Still, hope remains. The Supreme Court of late, especially during the term of Chief Justice Hilario Davide, has been pursuing a program of gender mainstreaming, starting a gender-sensitivity training program for judges and initiating other reforms in the rules such as the Rule on Examination of a Child Witness and the Rule on Violence against Women and their Children.

These changes, as well as the record of the judiciary in mainstreaming gender in its trial decisions, are documented in the book "Engendering the Philippine Judiciary," launched yesterday at the Manila Hotel.

The authors—Rowena Guanzon, Aurora Javate de Dios, Damcelle Torres and Theresa Balayon—say the book is meant to raise awareness among judges and justices of the "urgent call for gender sensitivity and gender justice," as well as "to contribute to the development of gender-fair jurisprudence in cases of violence against women and girl-children."

* * *

THE FIRST part of the book is devoted to the results of the first Gender Justice Awards, which recognized judges for their well-considered and well-written gender-sensitive decisions, as well as to a discussion of gender bias in the courts. The second part contains digests of significant decisions of the Supreme Court on VAW cases.

Being under appeal, the "Subic Rape case" is not yet discussed in "Engendering the Philippine Judiciary," but I would bet that subsequent works on gender issues and the courts will prominently feature the case of Nicole and the four Marines. It certainly deserves an entire volume by itself, not only for its gender aspect, but also for its implications on the forging of an independent foreign policy.

Already, though, the coverage of the case and the subsequent controversy raised by related issues like custody of Smith point to the lingering, indeed, continually reinforced, bias of Philippine society against women who dare go public with their charges of rape. For instance, in choosing to assert Philippine sovereignty in retaining custody of Smith, Judge Benjamin Pozon has been accused by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez of being "sympathetic to Nicole and leftist groups." Why, does one have to be leftist to think violence against women is a crime and a human rights violation? Does Gonzalez believe that nationalism is the exclusive province of the Left?

* * *

OTHERS have made much of the statement of the van driver Timoteo Soriano Jr. that no rape occurred while Nicole was inside the van with the four Marines, gleefully looking forward to a "serious review" of the case in higher courts.

Why would the self-serving statement of a driver, who recanted when prosecutors threatened to include him among the accused, be more credible to these people than the considered verdict of a judge who had months to listen to testimony and weigh the evidence?

A women's group based in Davao, meanwhile, has written US Ambassador Kristie Kenney to demand the dismissal from service of Smith's acquitted co-accused, who at the very least did nothing (and even cheered on) while Smith was raping Nicole. Let's see how Kenney will respond to this—and how she chooses where her loyalties lie: to her job or to her gender?

Cafe Adriatico

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

LAST WEEK NICK JOAQUIN'S LAST WORK, "Abe: A Frank Sketch of E. Aguilar Cruz," was launched in Larry Cruz's newest restaurant in the Fort named after his father Abe Cruz. The LJC restaurants have come a long way since the original Café Adriatico that made Malate the busy weekend place it is today. I will write about the book and its colorful subject in another column, but today memory brings me back to Café Adriatico, the original one on M. Adriatico Street, Malate, Manila, that has become more than a popular place to eat and has turned into a point of convergence—for friendship, gossip, people-watching, dates, engagements, divorces, sometimes even reconciliations. At times, to my surprise, it also is a pick-up joint. All things happy, sad, and in between have happened in this dark corner of the city remembered mostly for the old world ambience that has always been copied but never quite duplicated.

Café Adriatico's ambience flows from the eccentric mix of art and antiques that fill its cozy space. The American eagle that dominates the bar and the ground floor of the café is not a politically incorrect statement in the days of the Visiting Forces Agreement but a piece of old wood salvaged from a pre-war house. It swirls of art nouveau, and you are amazed to notice that it is made of Philippine hardwood (narra) and came from an era when people had the time to suit the *merienda* chocolate to match the guest's stature. The VIPs (now VVIPs) would be served *chocolate eh'* thick and gritty unlike the insignificant others who got the *chocolate ah* ("*ah*" for "*aguado*") that was thin and watery.

All this goes back to Rizal's novels and, notwithstanding modern conveniences like the microwave oven or industrial mixer, chocolate eh is still made from sturdy chocolate balls, heated in heavy brass *chocolateras* and made frothy manually with the wooden mixer or *batirol* that a younger generation sometimes mistake for a kinky sex toy. I have often wondered when the café will carry, as "courtesy of choice," the chocolate ah to complement its drink list.

When I had my first chocolate eh, with a wonderfully crunchy tuna and cheese sandwich (now extinct like the dodo) a quarter of a century ago, Café Adriatico occupied only the ground floor of its present two floors. It was always rowdy upstairs and one could hear running footsteps, shouting, and things crashing on the second floor. We would listen to the riot and once everything fell quiet, we wanted to call the police and an ambulance, thinking one or more people were dead upstairs.

Unfortunately, I was not old enough to have patronized the café when it was still an antique shop that served bottomless brewed coffee and cakes fresh from a supermarket counter. In its early days, Café Adriatico was an antique shop masquerading as a café, with few tables and chairs for customers, mostly stained hardwood tables from the Ilocos. Slightly askew or even wobbly, the chairs were those anti-ergonomic chairs with cane seats that caught stockings or, worse, the *batibot* chairs that were so uncomfortable they made customer turnover faster because you were not encouraged to linger and nurse your drinks. Today, the place is filled with what they call in Pampanga "modern antiques."

The place used to be lined with 19th century lithographs and prints depicting scenes from the colonial Philippines. There were many small paintings around: landscapes, cityscapes, and interiors by the Dimasalang Group that included E. Aguilar Cruz, Romulo Galicano, Sofronio Y. Mendoza or SYM, and the late Ibarra de la Rosa and Andres Cristobal Cruz. The watercolors of Philippine folk religious imagery or *santos* by Claude Tayag are a surprise for people who know him today as a food writer, chef and sculptor.

The tables used to have small oil lamps to provide a soft glow to one's date, as well as green glass Perrier bottles that held freshly cut flowers. In those early days, even coffee mugs and plates were made by Jon Pettyjohn whose works are now prized possessions displayed behind glass rather than used for food and drink.

Music like the BBC was scheduled and at some point it was possible to tell the passing of an hour from the music playing because they only had two worn-out cassette tapes. Baroque favorites were only played till midnight when the music turned to a playful Mozart horn concerto, and then you knew it was time to go home.

They say that when we talk of Manila and its glories, we refer to it in the past tense. The thing can be said about Café Adriatico, which now has a bigger branch across the street. The place is still there, alive and kicking after three decades. The food has definitely improved and become more cosmopolitan, and there is wider range of choice. The space is much larger and the trademark old-world charm is still there, but traipsing through memory lane and history explains not only why Café Adriatico looks and feels the way it does, but also why it has become a place of personal history for me and its regular patrons, some of whom claim that all the chocolate they have consumed must have paid for its doors or main posts.

Christmas is a time for warmth and memory, and the Abe book launch brought back all these.

(Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu)

Corruption's faces

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

IT SOUNDED ALMOST LIKE A JOKE, BUT MY FATHER SAYS it's true. This story he picked up on one of the Chinese cable channels' newscasts.

A man had failed in a suicide attempt because the rat poison he used turned out to be adulterated. His family was jubilant and bought some alcoholic beverages to celebrate. But fate works in strange ways: the liquor was adulterated, too, and accomplished what the despondent man had failed to do with the rat poison.

My father isn't quite sure if this happened in Taiwan or in mainland China, but his point is that corruption is so rampant now that people's lives are being put on the line. Every day now there are reports on Chinese cable television about scams with consumer goods, including some that kill. The most disturbing one I heard some time back was about adulterated milk powder that killed several children.

I'm sharing these stories partly to warn readers about some of those cheap imports coming in, especially from China. Some, like, would you believe P400 cassette recorders, don't pose major dangers except that you would probably realize, when the product breaks down after a few weeks, that you've just thrown away money on an expensive toy. I have no doubts that China will eventually produce top-quality durable consumer goods, but right now, production standards are abysmally low in many manufacturing sectors. Even worse, those already low standards are often violated because of corruption. I'm afraid many Chinese electronic products are just too shoddy right now, and some can pose very real risks, for example Christmas lights that easily overheat and short-circuit.

Then there are all these food products, many with the most outrageous health claims. I often check out the ones my parents buy or get as gifts and really, many aren't even worth the packaging. I've found insects and mold inside, and joke that at least the insects provide some nutrition, considering that many of these products are junk, with too much flour, sugar or salt.

Riding on the craze for traditional medicine, we're also getting many Chinese medicinal products with claims of being "organic" or "natural." Again, I'd be very careful here. If you can't read Chinese, you won't know that some of these products contain quite powerful and dangerous Western drugs. I've found cold remedies with tranquilizers and antibiotics, and "pain killers" with steroids. These are the "safer" medicines in the sense that they at least have the ingredients printed out. I shudder to think of all the other health products that aren't as straightforward. Again, there are laws that regulate the production of medicines, including a prohibition on the mixing of traditional and Western ingredients, but the corruption's so rampant the laws have little meaning.

Respectable

I started off with China because we tend to get so depressed thinking of corruption in the Philippines. It's bad here, no doubt, but corruption is found everywhere and its adverse consequences know no borders as substandard products enter global trade.

But I did want to get now to corruption's faces. The word "corrupt" makes us think of sinister-looking characters, operating in dark corners. In reality, and this is what is so terrifying, corruption's many faces are often quite benign, even pleasant. There's the ever respectable businessmen or businesswomen with their briefcases and laptops, but who have perfected the art of paying off whoever needs to be paid off. The goods that are dumped here have gone through so many layers of corruption, from the regulatory agencies in China to local customs officials.

We think, too, of corruption, as being confined to "poor" countries like our own, forgetting the multibillion dollar scandals of Enron and America's corporate world. Talk about respectable.

We think of fly-by-night factories packaging contaminated milk powder in some seedy building. But what about those huge multinational companies that sued our Department of Health after it came up with stricter regulations on advertising and promotion of milk formula. It's corruption, too—and of the worst kind—when you bully Third World governments.

Family

Transparency International just came out with their latest annual ratings of corruption in the world, and this year, they also released results of a Global Corruption Barometer, based on surveys in several countries. In the Philippines, 16 percent of respondents said they paid bribes in the past 12 months. (Only 16 percent? I thought. It should have been higher.)

But the figure reminds us that corruption has many faces—including our own. And the corrupted? The police, Transparency International said, are the most "vulnerable." I use quotes there because it's hard to think of those pot-bellied scoundrels as vulnerable. Let me catch myself there: Yes, many of them do fit our stereotypes of the corrupt but think, too, of the last time you were held up by some policeman or traffic enforcer. They can actually be quite amiable, and ever so polite, full of "*po*" and "sir" and "ma'am" as they pull you over to the curb. More "*po*" and "sir" crop up as they accuse you of having violated some rule. At some point, you finally ask what you need to do. Oh, but don't they look so innocent when they go, "*Kayo po*. . ."

Psychologists talk about cognitive restructuring as a way of controlling your emotions. You're indignant over the corruption, so you try to calm yourself down by looking at that face, and trying to not to think of him (or, increasingly now, her) as low life. And that's what's so horrifying: you look at that face and you realize he or she looks just like many people we love: a child, a sibling, even a parent.

That is what is so disconcerting: it's a battle against time. Do we get to the point where there will be a total disconnect between what we say and do at home and in schools, and what happens out there in the real world? We can talk our heads off about corrupt politicians but early on, our children will pick up, catching on to all the little transactions in homes and offices, around permits and licenses and taxes and traffic violations.

I want to end on a hopeful note. I know some national government agencies and local governments are trying hard to streamline procedures and bureaucracies to cut some of the bottlenecks that invite corruption. I have many friends, too, who try extra hard to avoid those little "facilitating" transactions for permits and licenses, payments, even if it means a delay, say, in getting the house renovated or in getting a business started. It's not easy, but we need to think again of faces. Do we want someday to find someone we know, gambling with people's lives for a fee, and doing this with so much aplomb, so much graciousness?

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The Church's historical role in defending people

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE Philippines, in opposing the constituent assembly, is just being faithful to its tradition of defending the flock against the abuses of the civil authorities. Looking back to the very beginnings of the Church in our land, we discovered how the early missionaries were ordered to defend the people. The following account from the notes of my confrere Fr. Policarpo Hernandez, an avid scholar of the early history of the Church in the Philippines, shows this.

King Charles V had ordered the religious and clergy to "have great care and diligence in order that the natives be treated as brothers, esteemed and favored, and not to allow any violence, robbery or other kind of offenses against them." The Augustinian missionaries treated this commission seriously. Questions surrounding the just war and taxation—how much tribute the pacified natives should pay—would be a constant source of discord between the civil authorities and the Augustinian missionaries and would frame their stormy relationship for many years. The early Augustinian missionaries denounced abuses such as the subjugation of the natives by means of war and the collection of unjust amount of tribute by the *encomienderos* without giving the natives anything in return. But such disputes and disagreements would also lead to fruitful dialogues, resulting in a just policy and a common commitment to both the spiritual and temporal welfare of the natives.

Nowadays, the Church's denunciation of Charter change thrust of the House as "fraudulently illegal and immoral," its mobilization for a big rally on Dec. 17, and its warning to the people about the hidden agenda of Congress, hark back to our beginnings as a Church when the missionaries followed the order to defend the people against the abuses of civil authorities.

The Church is worthy of our support because she has always been consistent in her defense of and motherly care for the downtrodden flock, more so during critical points of our history as a nation. Moreover, the Church in her fortitude and prudence sees to it that resolute action results in a harmonious meeting of minds to settle differences for the authentic progress of our nation.

—FR. PETER CASIÑO, OSA,
San Agustin Convent,
Intramuros, Manila

Delayed SSS benefits and unrecorded contributions

IT WAS HEARTWARMING AND VERY REASSURING to read the Social Security System's "praise release" assuring its member that it has been doing something for the benefit of SSS members. Let me quote SSS: "We have implemented a covenant of service program that effectively eliminated backlogs in benefits and loans processing. In fact, salary loans, which normally take a week to process, now only take two days. On the other hand, retirement application can now be processed in 15 working days, down from 36 to 45 working days." (PDI, 10/9/06)

However, as a retiree, I find the service of the SSS excruciatingly slow. I filed for retirement benefits in October 2005 but until now have not received an official reply from the SSS except copies of follow-up letters addressed to: Flordeliza Sarmiento-section head, Operation Accounting Section-backroom, SSS Quezon City Branch, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Sent by Raul A. Casiano, branch manager, SSS Iloilo, dated 10/24/05, 1/18/06 and 5/8/06.

My case is one specific instance of delayed benefits. Every time I make a follow-up at SSS-Iloilo, people there would urge me to write directly to SSS Diliman. But then what's the use? If SSS Diliman cannot act on internal communications, what reason will they have in order to act on my case?

One redeeming factor I have noticed with the SSS is that it responds to and acts when prodded by the media. This is why I am writing this letter, hoping that the SSS may yet expedite the release of my benefits. And while they are on it, may I ask why my contributions when I was with Republic Broadcasting System (the pre-martial law name of GMA TV/Radio) are not reflected on my 555 records. I was employed by RBS-DYOO from 1965 to 1973, by the PCI Bank in various capacities from 1973 until I opted for early retirement in July 2000. However, the contributions in my name were posted only from 1976 onward. I used the same SSS number with both employers.

The truism about a retiree having a diminished income but ballooning medical bills is hitting me squarely, and so far the SSS is of no help. "SSS Kaagapay Mo Sa Kaunlaran"– vhat is that?

I hope the SSS people reconcile my records and release my benefits soonest. I have already waited long enough, not just for 15 days, but for more than a year.

—GLODUARDO P. PARREÑAS,
Ledesma Street, Pototan, 5008 Iloilo

Catholic Church nixes population control

DAVAO MAYOR RODRIGO DUTERTE, IN A speech, reportedly described the Catholic Church's population control program stupid. (PDI, 12/6/06) The fact is the Church has no such program. It has a family planning program which is essentially different from a population control program. Population control is immoral while family planning is moral. Only God has dominion over human life.

Duterte also said, "Sex is an instinct." But Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary defines sex as "the sum of the structural, functional, behavioral characteristics of living things that are involved in reproduction by two interacting parents and that distinguish males and females." We have to remember that man is a rational animal; as animals we do have instincts and senses, but as man we have intellect or reason and free will, which animals do not have. Moreover, Christians have faith, hope and love. The life of faith, hope and love is supernatural life or Christian life.

Duterte further said: "Artificial ways of preventing pregnancy is not against the sanctity of life." Before conception, yes; it is insanity to live a life in the level of an animal, to submit as a slave to one's instinct and senses or feelings.

"We do not want unwanted pregnancy," he said. In philosophy it is said: He who wants the means wants the end. What we want is more intelligent and Christian peoples of character who know their status in relation to their creator and Lord.

It is those who consider sex as an object of pleasure who cheapen and profane the image of God.

—REV. FR. ROBERT S. EMBILE, JCL,
Sto. Niño Parish Church,
Bukidnon Street,
Bago Bantay, Quezon City

House has gone down to lowest level of disrepute

THE FIRST MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, meaning the House of Representatives and the Senate, were persons of proven integrity and probity, who were imbued with the highest degree of statesmanship and love of country. Their most exemplary trait was *delicadeza*, a refinement of character that has been absent in the halls of Congress for more than 30 years or so.

At no time in the history of the Philippines has Congress sunk into its lowest levels of disrepute, corruption and greed. The present crop of politicians making up the membership of the current Congress is a disgrace to their forebears and Filipino people.

The members of the majority in Congress are like a pack of hyenas frothing in the mouth and salivating for more power, more money and more time to stay in office as "honorable" representatives of the people. Their constituents are dying of hunger, sickness and lack of shelter due to calamities, yet they would rather be insomniacs to push through a measure that will insure more deprivation for the majority of Filipinos who are already in the throes of hopelessness and despair.

It is worth noting that among those leading these thick faced "representatives" of the people are Luis Villafuerte of Camarines Sur and Edcel Lagman of Albay. Despite the devastation in their provinces, these two chose to stay in the "hollowed" halls of Congress to fight tooth and nail for the passage of the resolution convening a constituent assembly. These two stayed away from their starving constituents just to cater to the whims of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Speaker Jose de Venecia.

—RICKY A. JUAB,
3/F, Peoples' Gen. Insurance Bldg.,
Magallanes St., Intramuros, Manila

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Featuring: Rev. Franklin Graham & Rev. Pio Tica

MY HOPE programs will be aired on:

TV NETWORK	PROGRAM	DATE	TIME
VBN Channel 4	The Score Part 1	December 14, 2006	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	The Score Part 2	December 15, 2006	8:00 PM - 8:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16, 2006	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
RPN	The Score Part 1	December 14, 2006	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	The Score Part 2	December 15, 2006	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16, 2006	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
CABLE CHANNEL	**PROGRAM**	**DATE**	**TIME**
Jolo Cable Network Channel 2	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Maguindanao Skycable Cotabato City Channel 3	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Bongao Cable Tawi-Tawi Channel 3	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
CPU Alumni Metro Iloilo City Channel 3	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
PECBC - Medina, Misamis Oriental Ch 4	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Jolo Cable Network Channel 7	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
DYPR (ABS-CBN) Palawan Channel 7	The Score	December 14 & 15	6:00 PM - 6:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	5:30 PM - 6:30 PM
Kismet Cable Pagadian City Channel 8	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
ABS-CBN Pagadian, Zamboanga Channel 9	The Score	December 14 & 15	5:30 PM - 6:00 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	4:30 PM - 5:30 PM
ABS-CBN Ozamis, Misamis Occidental Channel 9	The Score	December 14 & 15	5:30 PM - 6:00 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	4:30 PM - 5:30 PM
DEARBC Cable TV Manolo Fortich Bukidnon Ch 10	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Fil Products Butuan City, Nasipit Channel 17	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Gemstar Cable San Francisco, Agusan del Sur Channel 17	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Orient Cable Dipolog City Channel 18	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

TV NETWORK	PROGRAM	DATE	TIME
IBC	The Score Part 1	December 14, 2006	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	The Score Part 2	December 15, 2006	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16, 2006	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
2nd AVENUE	The Score Part 1	December 14, 2006	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	The Score Part 2	December 15, 2006	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16, 2006	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
CABLE CHANNEL	**PROGRAM**	**DATE**	**TIME**
JVL Star Cable TV – Sultan Kudarat Channel 2	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Tri-Ex – Virac, Catanduanes Channel 2	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Marinduque Cable – Marinduque Channel 3	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
New City Cable TV – Isabela Channel 3	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Solum Cable – Northern Samar Channel 3	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Camiguin Island Cable TV – Mambajao, Mahinog, Camiguin Channel 4	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Caceres Cable TV – Naga City Channel 4	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Tabuk Kalinga Apayao Channel 6	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Eagle Vision – Bantay, Ilocos Sur Channel 6	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Nabunturan Cable TV – Nabunturan, Montevista & Compostela Channel 6	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Asian Vision Cable – Lucena City & Tayabas, Quezon Channel 6	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Misamis Cable TV – Oroquieta, Jimenez, Ozamis, Tudela, Aloran Channel 7	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Cordillera CATV Network – Kalinga Apayao Channel 8	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
L&S Cable – San Jose, Occidental Mindoro Channel 8	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Tamaraw TV Net – Calapan, Oriental Mindoro Channel 10	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Reliance Cable – Catarman, Northern Samar Channel 13	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Lagawe Multi-Purpose Coop – Lagawe Ifugao Channel 15	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
	Ang Kasagutan	December 16	7:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Solsona Cable TV – Solsona, Ilocos Norte Channel 15	The Score	December 14 & 15	7:00 PM - 7:30 PM
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54,000 bags of rice lost to 'Reming'

LEGAZPI CITY—AT LEAST 54,000 BAGS OF RICE stored in National Food Authority (NFA) warehouses in the Bicol region were destroyed and damaged as a result of Supertyphoon "Reming."

Out of these, 17,000 bags were destroyed and declared not fit for human consumption while 37,000 were damaged.

The damaged rice supply was worth P48.6 million, taking into consideration a selling price of P18 per kg and 50 kg per bag.

The typhoon blew away the roofs off the Jamestown warehouse located in Tabaco City in Albay, making 22,000 sacks useless for consumption.

According to Ruben Rimando, NFA officer in charge in Bicol, the damaged stock which are no longer fit for human consumption, will be bid out to feed suppliers.

"We are in the process of determining the price so we can bid it off before Christmas," he said.

Another warehouse in Libon, also in Albay, was also badly damaged by Reming.

Rimando placed the damage to its infrastructure at P34 million.

He, however, assured the public that there was enough rice supply in the typhoon-devastated region to last for 79 days.

"We have some 264,000 sacks of imported rice stock," he further said.

The window-period of approximately two-and-a-half months, however, takes into account other players such as private rice mill owners and other rice traders.

"If NFA solely takes care of the rice consumption requirements, the stock is only enough for nine days," Rimando said.

"We are also expecting 320,000 bags of rice supply from Manila," he said.

The region has an approximately daily consumption of 34,000 sacks of rice.

The NFA here, since Reming struck the region, has already released 78,996 bags of rice to the Department of Social Welfare and Development, the Office of Civil Defense and the local government units, mostly in Albay and Camarines Sur, "on cash or credit."

Historically, according to Rimando, Bicol does not produce enough rice for the 4.6 million people in the region.

Ironically, the region, which has one of the most fertile soils in the country, has to import or buy rice from neighboring provinces such as Quezon and Central Luzon. *Delma L. Peyra, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

KIM ATIENZA

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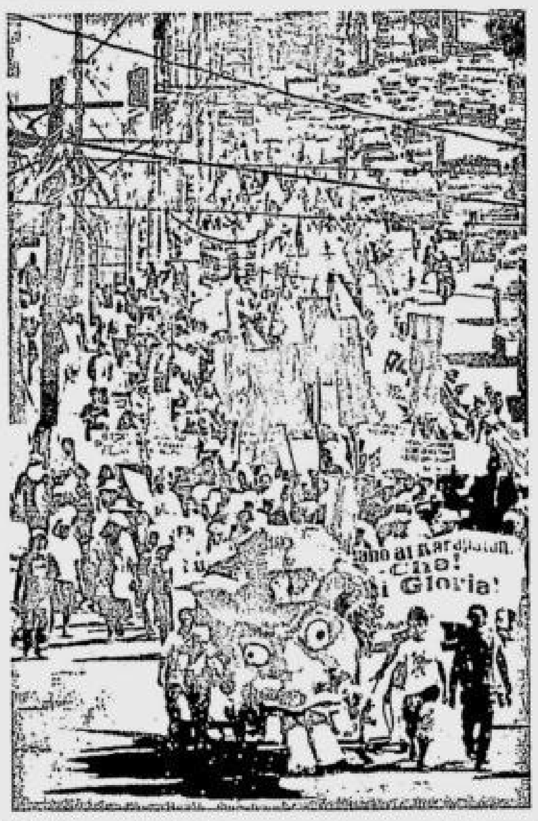


AT LEAST 1,000 activist farmers from Southern Tagalog marched on Quezon Avenue to Malacañang to protest a move to amend the Constitution led by allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the House of Representatives. RAFFY LERMA

Bishop asks LGU execs to join people in rallies

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—LEADERS OF various religious groups in Negros Occidental yesterday challenged local officials to join the people in a prayer rally at the Bacolod public plaza today to express their collective outrage at how the administration congressmen have "attempted to shamelessly, hastily and manipulatively tamper with our Constitution."

The Church leaders said that although Speaker Jose de Venecia has announced that the House is giving up its bid to amend the Constitution through a constituent assembly, they are now against Charter change by whatever means.

"We need to send a strong message to the powers that be—both the majority block in the House of Representatives and Malacañang, that the people have had enough of these brazen machinations," said a statement of the Church groups here read by Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra at a press conference Wednesday.

"We need to say that we, the people, hold Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ultimately accountable for these insidious plots to alter the political order to benefit politicians and not the people. We need to say that the people have lost trust and respect for their leaders," Navarra added.

The statement is being issued by the Diocese of Bacolod, the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, the Negros Regional Ecumenical Council, the Negrenses United Against Con-ass, the academe, people's organizations and cause-oriented groups.

Fr. Romeo Tagud, of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente and secretary general of the Promotion of Church People's Response in Negros, said the prayer rally this afternoon should send a strong message to public officials that they should uphold the interest of the people rather than their loyalty to their political parties and Ms Arroyo.

"If our officials are committed to serve their constituents, they should walk with the people on Friday," he said.

The gathering is not a culmination but the commencement of their protest, the statement read by Navarra said.

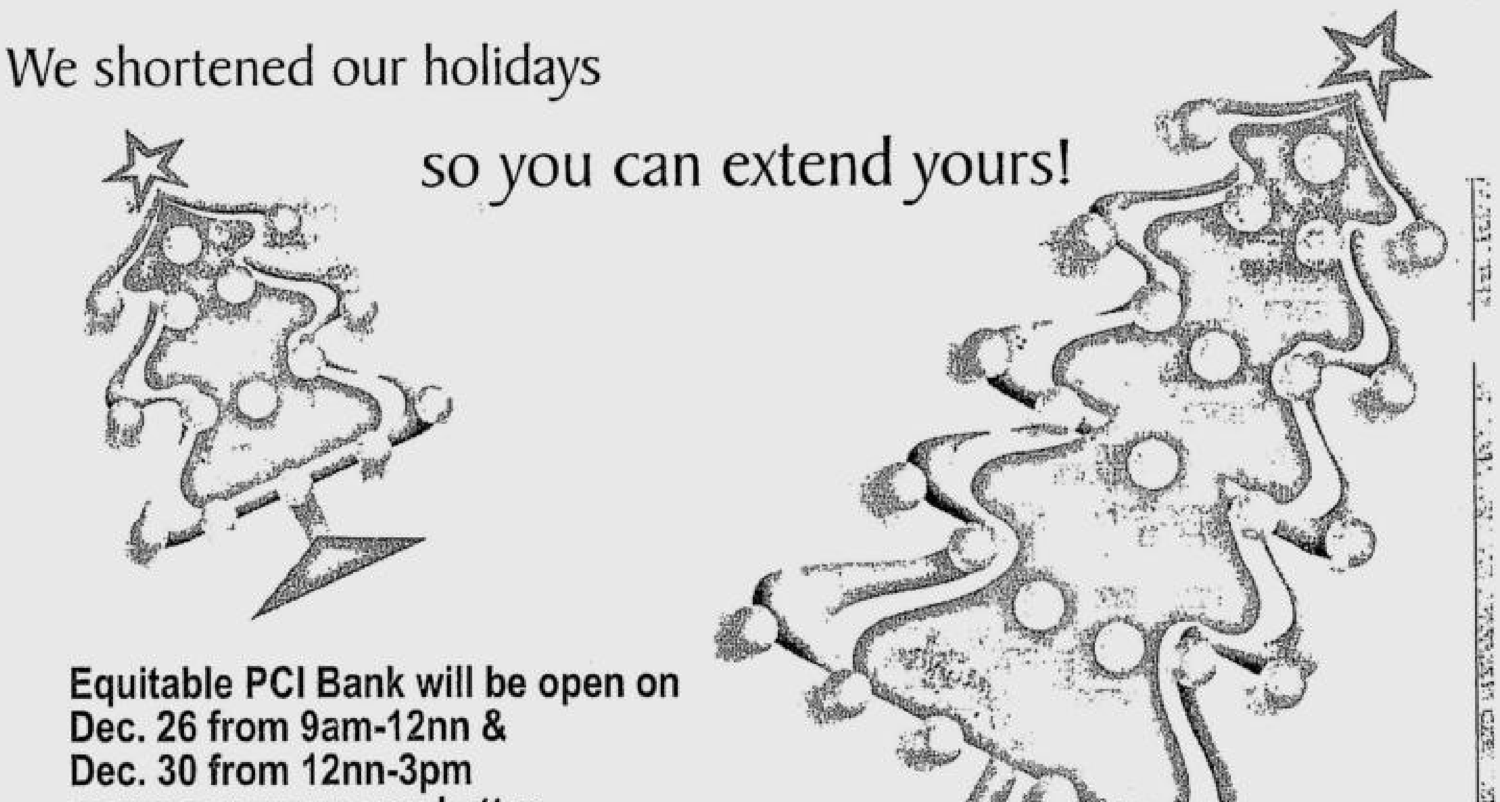
"It is not to close an ugly and sordid chapter in our nation's current history today, it is a call and challenge to a new vigilance," he said.

It is also a call to "watch and pray" and to fight any more attempts to "fool and shortchange the people," the statement said.

He said everyone who loves his country and cares for decency and morality in government should stand up and be counted.

Navarra said the congressmen who pushed for Con-ass acted contrary to the welfare of the people and country, and if voters are sensitive it was about time they should think whom to vote for.

The bishop also said he is against any form of Charter change at this time, adding that any talk about a constitutional convention should be taken up after the May 2007 elections.



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LASER SHOT CAPT

RECYCLED CHRISTMAS Children are drawn to Christmas decorative items that appear to be brand new but are actually made of recycled materials. Some enterprising Baguio City residents brought out the new from old materials by transforming these into Christmas decorations.

EV ESPIRITU/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

GSIS wants to take convention center

BAGUIO CITY—THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System notified the city government on Wednesday that it would reclaim the Baguio Convention Center that it bought in 2004 by staking P200 million of future revenues from the development of Camp John Hay.

Acting Vice Mayor Leandro Yangot, who is also acting mayor this week, said GSIS Senior Vice President Renato Santico issued the notice verbally during a meeting that was supposed to address the John Hay debts.

Yangot said the city government may end up defaulting on its obligations by Jan. 5, 2007 because the developers of Camp John Hay suspended payments after it lost its tax incentives in a Supreme Court ruling.

The Fil Estate-owned Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco) recently negotiated a new bailout deal with investors to sustain the John Hay project, city officials said.

Treasure

The city government owed a 25-percent share from CJHDevco's back rent, which now represents P590 million, according to Thelma Manaois, city treasurer.

The city will fight to keep the center, Yangot said, because of its historical value.

Former First Lady Imelda Marcos worked for the facility's construction to house the controversial world match between chess grandmasters Viktor Korchnoi and Anatoly Karpov in October 1978.

In 2003, former Mayor Bernardo Vergara struck a deal with GSIS.

Technically, the city government already defaulted on its first two payments of P35 million each covering 2005 and 2006, Yangot said. "The debt triples by January," he said.

But nothing has been resolved, he said, because representatives of CJHDevco and the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) have been snubbing a series of meetings set since November.

P50M in advance

BCDA advanced P50 million on the city's behalf to activate a tripartite sales agreement forged by GSIS president Winston Garcia and Vergara.

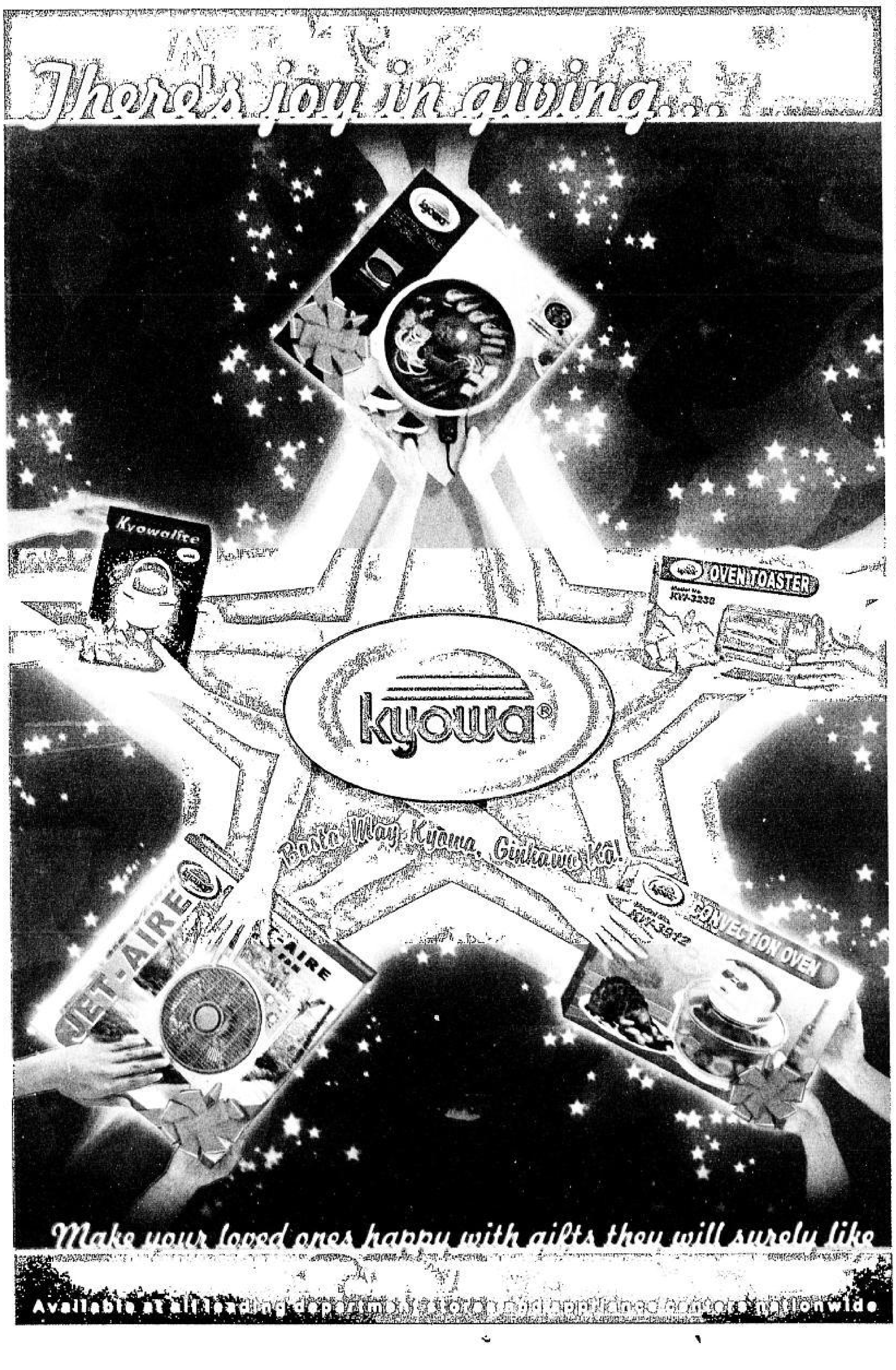
The city council tried to process a P50 million GSIS loan in November to complete these repairs but was rebuffed due to the John Hay arrears.

Santico told the city government this week that the GSIS would simply enforce the sales agreement.

The agreement obliges the city to post treasury bonds representing the convention center's P250-million price tag "within 90 days from Feb. 18, 2003... with an interest rate of 12 percent per annum," but Yangot said the government never pursued this arrangement.

Vergara and Garcia signed a second agreement which authorized BCDA to directly remit the city government's share from the John Hay rent to GSIS between 2004 and 2010.

However, not a centavo has been transmitted to GSIS, the agency said. *Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*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White shrimp importation, culture gets go signal

DAGUPAN CITY—FINALLY THE controversial vannamei (Pacific white shrimps) can be imported and cultured in the country after a "thorough and favorable import risk assessment" conducted during experiments to introduce them to farmers.

Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap will sign on Dec. 18 a fisheries administrative order (FAO) lifting the prohibition on the importation and culture of vannamei (*Penaues vannamei*) in the country.

The lifting of the prohibition was recommended by Malcolm Sarmiento Jr., Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources director, and Salvador Salacup, officer in charge of the office of the agriculture undersecretary for fisheries and livestock.

It has been a long wait for the vannamei to be finally legalized as a species for culture in the country, although hundreds of farmers are clandestinely raising it in different parts of the country, said Westly Rosario, chief of the Dagupan-based BFAR research center.

But he said vannamei importation will still be regulated and that the imported brood stock will be strictly screened by the government to ensure that these are disease-free.

The BFAR will also accredit hatcheries for the exotic and high risk species.

The entry of vannamei to the Philippines has been rough since 2001 when the ban on its importation and culture was imposed.

Despite the prohibition and strict surveillance in airports, traders have found ways to bring the shrimps into the country.

In December 2004, the BFAR entered into an agreement with the Agribusiness World Inc., a private group, for breeding of vannamei at the Dagupan center.

The FAO allowed importation only for experimental purposes by government agencies. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Calabarzon cops say STL effective 'jueteng' cover

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—RANKING OFficials of the Calabarzon police on Wednesday blamed the operations of the small town lottery (STL) for the sudden resurgence of guerrilla operations of "jueteng" in some areas of the region.

A senior police official, who asked not to be identified because of the sensitivity of the issue, said they had monitored several individuals collecting bets for STL but were actually drawing the winning bets "clandestinely like jueteng."

He said STL operations had only undermined whatever gains the police had in their campaign against the underground lottery.

"Our efforts to stop jueteng for several months were just wasted. It was really a waste!," he told the INQUIRER.

"We lost extra income then, we are being fooled now," he said in jest.

The official said they had also received reports that the operators of the STL themselves were behind the efforts to revive the illegal numbers game.

"Apparently, the operators of STL are not at all content with their earnings from running the state-sanctioned gambling that's why they resorted to bookies," the INQUIRER source said.

Bookies, he explained, are illegal draws held within the areas of the STL franchise.

Income down

Quoting intelligence reports, he said the daily earnings of STL operators were 60 percent less than what the maintainers of jueteng usually got.

"So if the operator used to collect P1 million a day, they stand to lose P600,000 a daily. That's a lot of money. Definitely you would want to recoup that in whatever way," he said.

He then cited the case of Quezon province where the franchise of the STL was first issued.

The official said they had suspicions that suspected jueteng operator Charing Magbuhos is actually the owner of Pirouette Corp., the owner of the STL franchise in the province.

He said because of the sudden drop in bet collection, Magbuhos had ordered her operators to conduct jueteng draws simultaneous with the STL draws held thrice a day.

"In that way, they can also use STL as scapegoat," he claimed.

Another ranking police officer said the issuance of STL franchise only made it difficult for them to arrest jueteng bet collectors and *cabos*.

IDs

He said whenever they had police operations on illegal gambling dens, suspected jueteng workers would present identifications cards that showed that they were employees of STL operators.

Just last Saturday, police arrested 11 jueteng bet collectors inside a subdivision in Calamba City while in the act of drawing the winning combinations for the afternoon session.

The official said that when accosted, the arrested suspects claimed that the draw was for the STL.

He said the men pointed to a certain Don Ramon Preza, who runs the STL operations in Laguna, as their boss.

"But, of course, we did not buy their explanation. Because if it was indeed an STL draw, then it should only be held in San Pedro (town) where its office is located," he said.

The two officials likewise supported the call of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) for local governments to stop giving out STL franchise.

They said Lingayen-Dagupan Bishop Oscar Cruz was right in saying that the state-sponsored gambling and jueteng were a "dangerous and insidious pairing."

They said the government could not win the battle against illegal gambling if the STL continued to operate.

Bishop Cruz said STL was an effective front for jueteng and called on the government to scrap the lottery which was designed as a replacement for the underworld game of numbers.

The CBCP also called on officials to reject STL and put a stop to its operations because it was contributing to the decay of moral fibers in communities, making people rely on gambling rather than hard work in earning a living.

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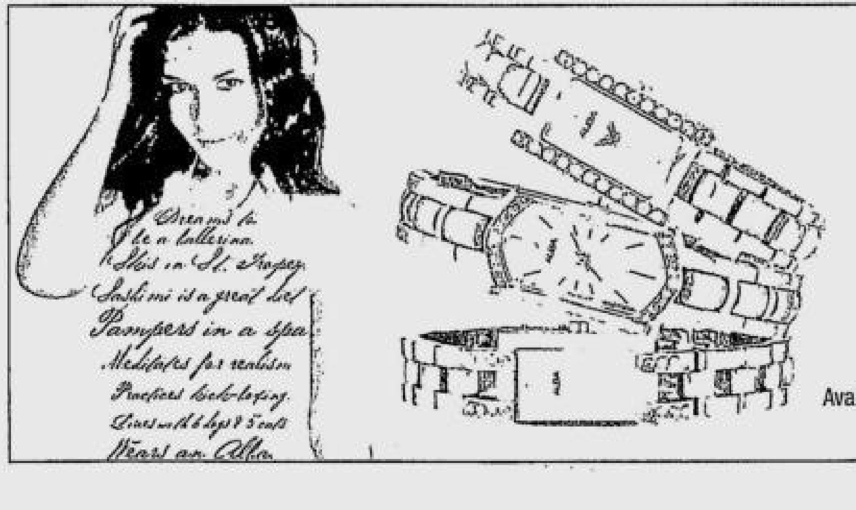

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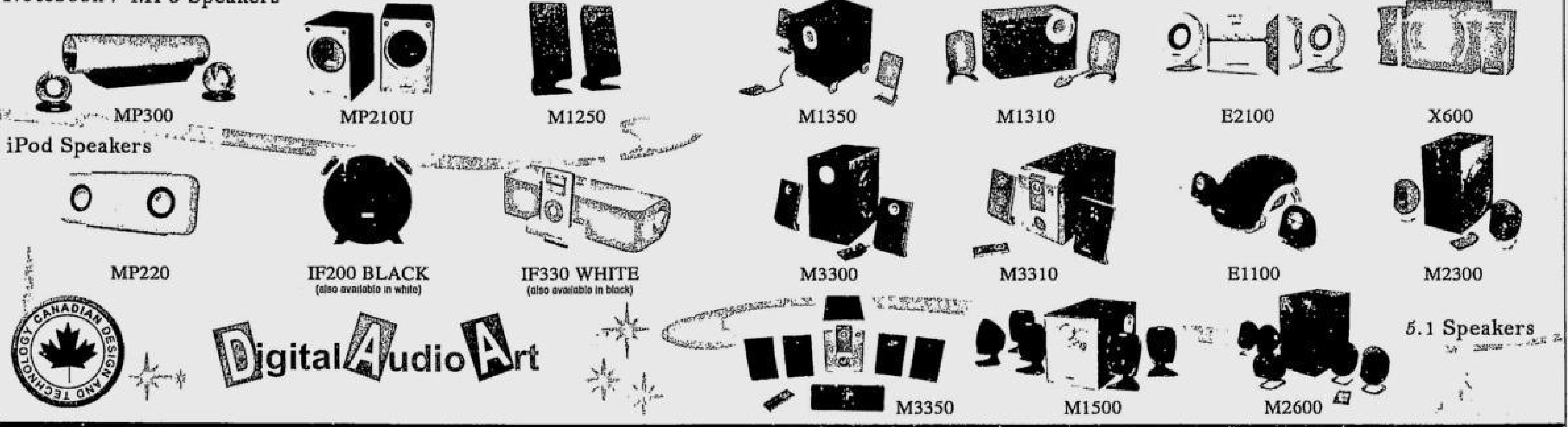

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NPA rebels strike back in Bulacan, kill local exec

CITY OF MALOLOS—COMMUNIST REBELS have struck back in the coastal areas of Bulacan, contrary to a military claim that a series of government attacks has driven them away from this part of Central Luzon.

Residents and local officials said New People's Army rebels wanted to make their presence felt in the province's coastal areas by killing Reynato Estrella, chair of Barangay Atlag here, on Tuesday night.

On Nov. 22, 1st Lt. Larry Padrigo and Cpl. Nelson Abillo, were killed while another soldier, Sgt. Arnold Tangonan, was wounded in an encounter with 20 heavily armed rebels at Sitio Nagdasig in Barangay San Jose in Calumpit town.

On July 16, suspected rebels gunned down Capt. Paul Fortuny of the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion based in Norzagaray town.

Soldiers from the Army's 7th Infantry Division of the Northern Luzon Command were deployed in the mountainous towns in Bulacan in January as part of an intensified antiinsurgency war in Central Luzon.

Supt. Raul Gomez, head of the 703rd Brigade under the 7th ID, said NPA rebels in Bulacan, particularly those in the coastal towns, moved elsewhere because fishpond operators had stopped giving them "revolutionary taxes."

The attacks came as leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines announced that the NPA was given fresh orders to launch offensives against government targets in the coming days.

"NPA units nationwide will be planning and carrying out tactical offensives (in) the next few days and weeks against forces of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, and their paramilitary adjuncts ...," said Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, CPP spokesperson, in an e-mail statement.

The CPP has called on its members in more than 120 guerrilla fronts nationwide to carry out attacks and join the people's protest against Charter change.

Last week, Malacañang approved a military recommendation not to declare a ceasefire with communist rebels this coming Christmas.

Earlier, the NPA declared a unilateral ceasefire in areas devastated by volcanic mudslides unleashed by Supertyphoon "Reming" to allow its armed units and supporters to conduct "rescue operations."

But it did not say when the ceasefire would be lifted.

The NPA, the CPP armed wing, is listed as a "foreign terrorist organization" by the United States, along with the extremist Abu Sayyaf based in southern Mindanao.

The communist rebels have been waging a 37-year Maoist war to seize power. *Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Beware of pols, 'Idol' told

LUCENA CITY—WITH the coming election season, relatives and local fans of the first Philippine Idol, Maureen "Mau" Marcelo have one piece of advice to her: Stay away from politicians.

"With her newfound national popularity, I would advise her not to allow herself to be used by politicians," Mau's grandmother, Erlinda Reyes, told the INQUIRER in an interview on Monday.

The legions of Mau's fans have the same message to the latest singing sensation who was born and grew up in this capital city.

Text messages

"Even before the finals at the Big Dome when she guested in my program, most of the text messages and phone calls from her fans that I received had also advised Mau to shy away from partisan politics," said Arnel Avila, host of morning cable TV program "Pag-us-apan Natin" aired over STV6.

Avila predicted that politicians would come in droves to get Mau's support and endorsement in the coming elections.

"It would be good for her to just politely turn them down," Avila quoted some of the messages of Mau's fans as saying.

"And it would also be better for her to just concentrate on her participation in the upcoming World Idol singing contest next year and leave elections to professional politicians," the local TV broadcaster said.

Support

He said local politicians had originally extended their support to another local candidate, Raymond Sajor.

"In their previous streamers, only the name of Raymond Sajor was written. There was no mention of Mau, probably thinking that she had less chances of winning. But when Raymond was disqualified and she reached the finals, all of a sudden they shifted their attention to her," Avila said.

He noted that when Mau arrived in the studio for the TV interview, she rode a borrowed barangay patrol vehicle, assisted by only one village councilor.

But a day after Mau bested the two other Philippine Idol finalists, Jan Nieto and Gian Magdangal, in the grand finals at the Araneta Coliseum on Saturday and Sunday, streamers of all sizes and colors from local politicians extolling her feat suddenly mushroomed in major highways of this city and in some parts of the province. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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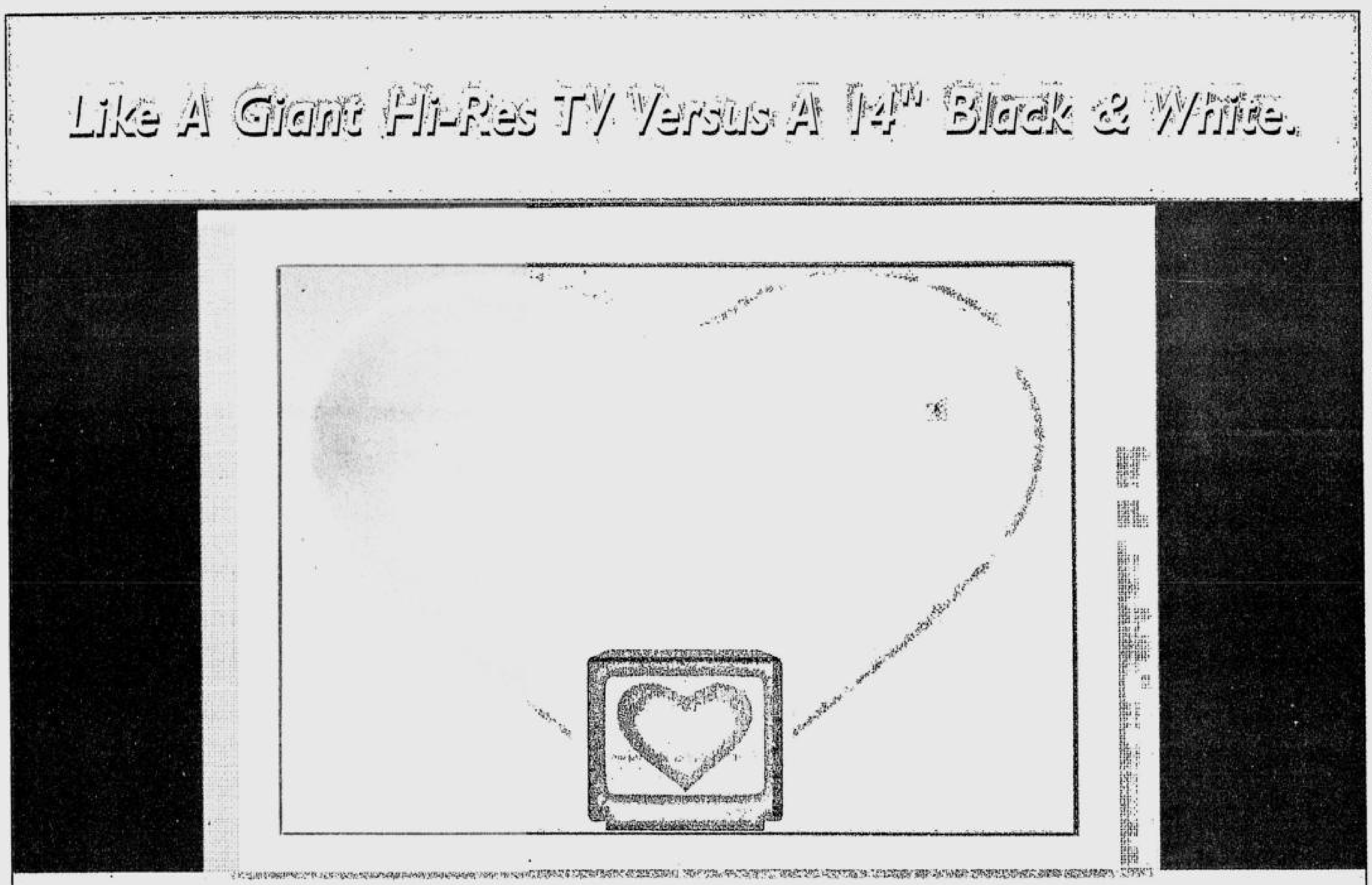
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Politicians, Bros. Mike, Eddie barred on stage

From page A1

convening a constituent assembly (Con-ass) after their bid to adopt the parliamentary system through a people's initiative was declared illegal by the Supreme Court in October.

As a result, the House leadership backtracked and shelved the Con-ass plan (*Story on Page A1*).

Officials threaten rallyists

Showing apprehension, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Education Secretary Jesli Lapus issued directives reminding government workers and teachers that they were not authorized to attend political gatherings.

"The teachers know what's in the rules," Lapus said.

Politicians yesterday reacted sharply to the police threat. "This is just a prayer rally," said Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. "What's wrong with praying and expressing one's sentiments?"

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, CBCP president, earlier described the prayer rally as a "call for the purification of reason, for the reawakening of the moral forces, for the just ordering of society." He was also referring to similar activities set to be held in dioceses around the country today.

Tentative schedule

A tentative schedule for Sunday called for the assembly of participants at the grandstand area beginning at 2 p.m. The program starts an hour later with an interfaith invocation, followed by Lagdameo's message and the concelebrated Mass at around 5 p.m.

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales will be the main celebrant during the Mass and will give the homily.

As of yesterday, at least 11 other prelates had confirmed their participation—Lagdameo, Manila Auxiliary Bishops Broderick Pabillo and Bernardino Cortez, Bishops Jose Oliveros of Malolos, Gabriel Reyes of Antipolo, Honesto Ongtioco of Cubao, Francisco San Diego of Pasig, Jesse Mercado of Parañaque, Deogracias Iñiguez of Caloocan, Antonio Tobias of Novaliches and Socrates Villegas of Balanga.

The bishops will be joined on stage by representatives from the urban poor and selected students from schools belonging to the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, according to De Villa.

Part of the program will be an elaboration on the purpose of the gathering by Judith Aldaba, vice president for academic affairs of De La Salle University-Araneta.

"The idea is to express the purpose of our gathering through a person who has no political affiliation whatsoever," De Villa said.

Velarde takes over

The gathering will be culminated by a declaration of unity dubbed "Pasimula ng Pagkakaisa sa Liwanag" (start of unity for the light), she said.

From then on, Velarde will take over for the regular prayer assembly of his El Shaddai followers, she said.

Msgr. Pedro Quitorio, CBCP spokesperson, said the bishops were pushing through with the prayer rally despite the announcement that Con-ass was officially "dead."

He said the occasion could not yet be turned into a thanksgiving Mass since "we still have so many problems."

"The country is still in shambles because of self-serving politicians," he told the INQUIRER. "The Charter change controversy is just the tip of the iceberg. We're still facing the serious problem of people working on their own."

Last-minute plea

Administration lawmakers made a last-minute plea for the CBCP to call off the prayer rally, to be attended by a broad range of civil society groups, including gunless society advocate Nandy Pacheco's Ang Kapatiran, a nationally accredited political party.

"As we archive in the tomb of forgotten memories today the Con-ass resolution, the opposition has lost its cause to do battle in the streets and it's time to stop these divisiveness, roll up our sleeves and get back to work," said House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles. "No more necrological speeches on Con-ass." ***With reports from Philip C. Tubeza, Michael Lim Ubac, Alcuin Papa and TJ Burgonio***

BUNYE

BUSINESS AS USUAL: President Arroyo animatedly leads a round table discussion on energy even as she's faced with a public uproar and massive street protests over Con-ass even if it had already been scrapped. AP/PCPO

It's official: GMA jumps off Cha-cha express

From page A1

nounced after the Christmas holidays.

In a news briefing, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the consensus on Charter change (Cha-cha) was that the time was not right.

"You can feel it from the pulse of the people," Bunye said. "The President is pragmatic, is realistic. The way things are, the people are not prepared at this time."

A time for everything

Bunye, however, did not reply to questions on what motivated the President to drop Cha-cha after more than a year of preaching the urgency of fundamental reforms.

Asked if the threat of a mammoth rally this Sunday against the Con-ass plan influenced Ms Arroyo's views, Bunye said: "There is a time for everything."

Ms Arroyo had called for a "great debate" on amending the Constitution in her State of the Nation Address in 2005 after weathering the worst political crisis of her presidency that was sparked by the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal.

Her about-face came just a few months after she had endorsed the people's initiative as the best mode to amend the Constitution—a move that was shot down by the Supreme Court in October as illegal and a "gigantic fraud."

A few weeks earlier, she had presided over a series of intimate caucuses with members of the House in Malacañang to map out the strategy to carry out Con-ass that reportedly included payoffs.

Singson warning

In a text message to the INQUIRER, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, also chair of the League of Governors, said: "We would like to commend the President for listening to the real voice of the people. We believe that her decision will move the country closer to unity."

Singson and other local government officials had met the President in Malacañang last Thursday and advised her to drop Con-ass because it could spark more opposition against her administration.

The President had apparently heeded the warning as well as protests from Church leaders and the Senate as witnessed from De Venecia's announcement posthaste on Saturday of his group's shift from a Con-ass to a constitutional convention that was also summarily rejected by Cha-cha opponents.

Ms Arroyo commended De Venecia and his Cha-cha adherents for their "statesmanship" in withdrawing the Con-ass efforts that led to the confrontation with the Senate and other civil society groups opposed to administration attempts to fast-track Charter change.

De Venecia commended

"I thank Speaker Joe de Venecia and his valiant allies in the House for heeding the voice of national consolidation and unity without sacrificing their high vision of political renewal," Ms Arroyo said.

"It is time to gather together all the energies of our people for the continuing work ahead of maintaining our economic strength, ensuring the social payback of economic reforms and helping distressed communities back to their feet."

Bunye said that the President had spoken to De Venecia about her change of heart but he was adamant that this was by no means "interference" on the legislative branch. Bunye also stressed that the President had never endorsed any specific mode of changing the Charter.

He said that the President would resume the Cha-cha initiative "at a later time" based on what she "feels as the right timing in accordance with the mode that the people will accept."

Tracking people's sentiments

Christian Monsod, convenor of the multi-sectoral group OneVoice formed to oppose Cha-cha, welcomed Ms Arroyo's move. "That's a step forward. They saw that the people don't want it at this time," said Monsod.

Added former Senate President Jovito Salonga: "She's keeping track of the people's sentiments." ***With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Michael Lim Ubac and Norman Bordadora***

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Tipon to use Asian Games bonus to build dream home

From page A1

from Bacolod City who won the bantamweight gold medal against South Korea's Han Soon-chul at the 15th Asian Games Wednesday night.

"*Baka hindi ko na mapanalunan ito sa ibang laban* (I might not be able to earn this in future fights)," he added, clasping his gold medal.

Tipon has come a long way since 2000 when, as a still-rough, gangling, 5-foot-7 pug, he impressed national coaches during the National Open boxing championships in Iriga City.

Coach Roehl Velasco said the then 18-year-old Tipon had the height, long arms and a fighter's heart that could still be polished.

Five years later, Tipon won his first big international tournament in Pakistan's Greenhill Cup. He followed it up with gold-medal performances in last year's Manila Southeast Asian Games, the Asian Boxing Championships in Vietnam and the Tammer Cup in Finland.

THE PHILIPPINES' Joan Tipon celebrates his gold medal at the awards ceremony for their men's bantamweight 54 kg final boxing bout at the Aspire Hall in Doha.

Besting Olympians

Tipon clinched "Best Boxer" honors in Vietnam, an award he won hands down for besting three Athens Olympians, one of them the defending champion.

"*Mahirap maging boksingero dahil kadalasan malalayo ka sa pamilya* (It's hard being a boxer because you spend times away from your family)," said Tipon, who looks forward to seeing his wife Marsha Lou and kids Mikaela Joselle, 3, and Tobet, 2.

Marsha Lou was born in 1972, the year former President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law.

The family shares a one-bedroom house on Leveriza Street in Pasay City.

Tipon recalled the days when young troublemakers in his school, the Rafael Memorial High School in Talisay, Negros Occidental, taunted him for having a girl's name.

Taunts in school

"*Sabi ko sa kanila, kung hindi nila ako titigilan, suntukan na lang kami* (I warned them I would fight them if they did not stop taunting me)," he said.

Joan comes from the first two letters of his grandparents' names, Jose and Anna Lisa.

In outsmarting and outpointing the Korean pug, 21-10, Tipon became the second boxer, after flyweight Violito Payla, to rule his division in the Games and the third Filipino to bag the gold after billiards player Antonio Gabica in 9-ball.

On the way to the finals, Tipon outpointed Chinese Taipei's Liu Shih-Jung, 23-10, and North Korea's Kim Won-guk, 22-15, before nipping Athens Olympics silver medalist Worapoj Petchkoom by referees' decision after both fighters ended up tied at 13-13.

THE PACQUIAOS at the Palace with President Arroyo in January after his first win over Erik Morales. Mother Dionisia is at extreme right.

PDI PHOTO

Manny gives ma 'old' car plus driver and security guard

From page A1

in Las Vegas, his mother Dionisia said she only wanted a car as *balato* (gift) from him.

"Manny, just give me a car," Dionisia told a television station after his son defeated Morales to become World Boxing Council super featherweight champion and won a $3-million (P150-million) purse, aside from percentage shares in pay-per-view subscriptions.

On Wednesday, the woman got more than what she had wished for—a Toyota Altis that was rarely used by Manny's wife Jinky but still flawless. A brand-new Altis costs P720,000.

"Thanks, son," a grinning Dionisia said.

Manny also assigned a driver and a security escort to his mother.

Kidnapping threat

Recently, police authorities warned the Filipino ring sensation of an alleged plot by a kidnapping syndicate to snatch any member of his family.

Chief Supt. German Doria, police chief of Central Mindanao, said the threat was monitored by intelligence officers. He said police were still verifying the threat but added that Manny should not let his guard down.

Just ask him

Manny said he was appealing to whoever was plotting to harm his family to just ask him if they needed anything. The southpaw is known for his kind-heartedness among residents here and in other areas.

Every time Manny returns home after his fight, people would troop to his house. He would always give them gifts, including cash.

Recently, he gave P3,000 to former world boxing champion Rolando Navarrete.

Aside from the car, Manny shoulders the cost of materials and construction of a peripheral fence for his mother's house in Labungal village here.

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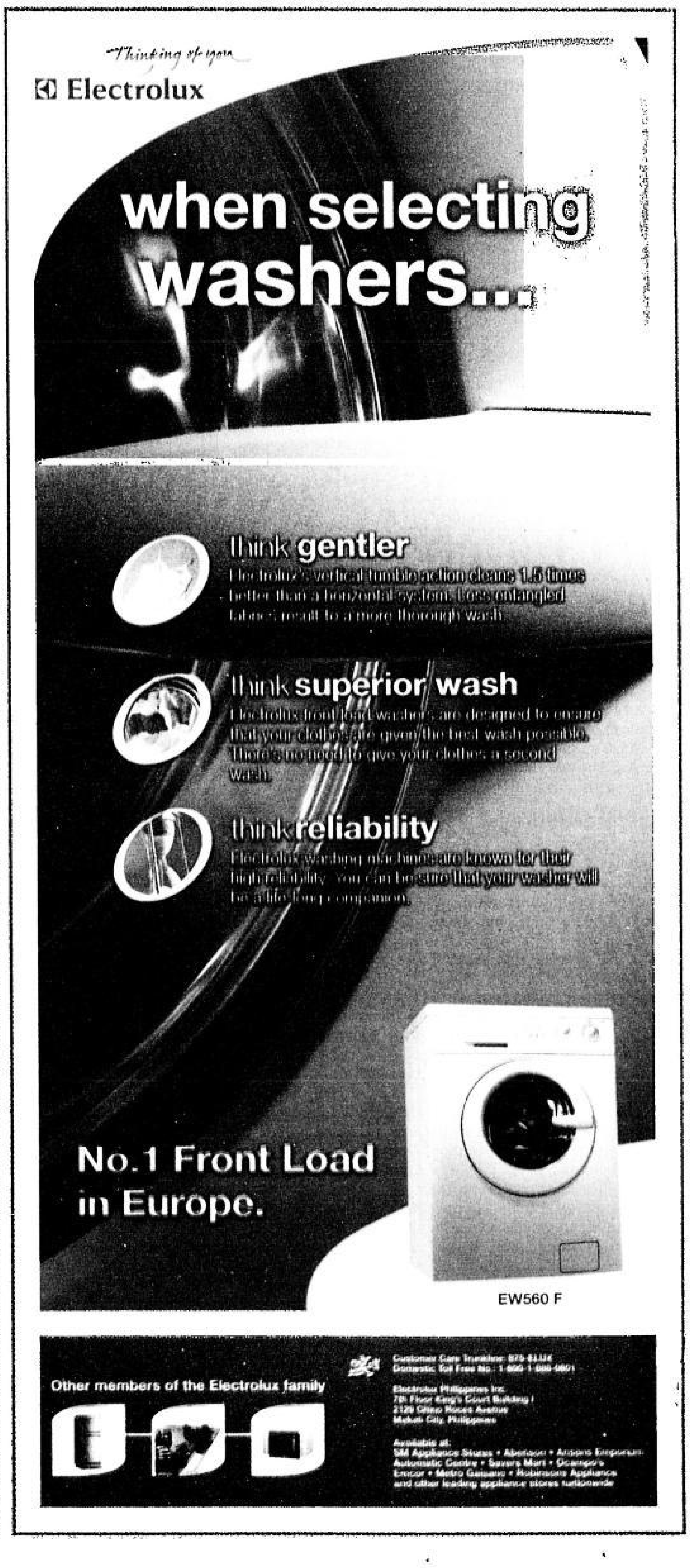

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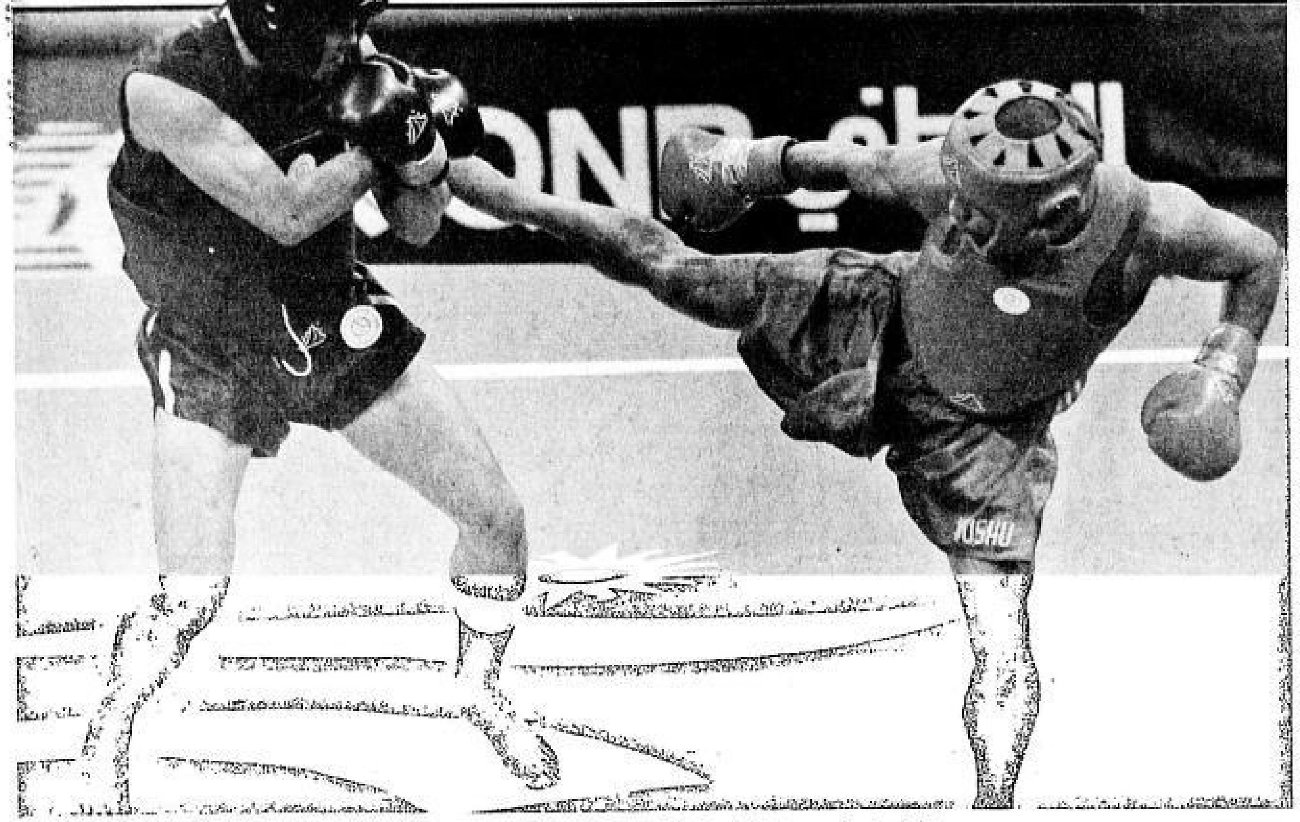
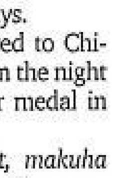


RENE Catalan unleashes a gold-winning kick on Phan Quoc Vinh of Vietnam last night. LYN RILLON

Catalan gives RP 4th gold

By Ted S. Melendres, *Sports Editor*

DOHA, QATAR—SCORING WITH IMPUNITY IN BOTH ROUNDS, reigning world champion Rene Catalan whipped Vietnam's Phan Quoc Vinh, 2-0, last night to win wushu's -52 kilogram gold medal, the Philippines' fourth at the 15th Asian Games.



More Sports on A31-A36

The 28-year-old, clean-shaven Catalan never allowed the taller but injured Vietnamese to score in the fight as he won, 5-0, in both rounds.

Catalan's victory, celebrated by about 300 jubilant Filipinos in the gallery, boosted the country's golden output to four, surpassing the three-gold harvest of the national contingent in the 2002 Asiad in Busan, South Korea.

And it capped a campaign that saw Filipinos score four championships in the last four days.

Eduard Folayang bowed to China's Xu Yanfei, 2-0, later in the night and settled for the silver medal in the -70 kg event.

"*Ibinuhos ko na lahat, makuha lang ang* gold (I fought with everything to nail the gold)," said Catalan, who matched the triumphant feats of billiards player Antonio Gabica in 9-ball singles and boxers Violito Payla and Joan Tipon.

Catalan stands to earn P1.5 million under the government's sports incentive program. He did not get any cash bonus when he won the -48 kg world title in Hanoi last year.

On the way to the gold, the supremely confident Catalan downed Kyrgyzstan's Utkir Hudoyarov in the round of 16, 2-0; Laos' Phuokhong Khamsounthone in the quarterfinals, 1-0; and Yemen's Naji Al Ashwal in the semifinals, 2-0.

"I dedicate this victory to everyone back home—my family, the President of the Philippines, the wushu federation and the Philippine Sports Commission," Catalan said.

He said his family served as his biggest inspiration during the Games.

"I prepared hard for my opponent as he is the toughest fighter in this weight division," Catalan said of the 22-year-old from Hanoi who rued shoulder and leg injuries he sustained in earlier fights.

After losing the first round by just a point, 1-2, Folayang was thrown out of the mat twice in the second by the taller and heftier Chinese. The second fall-off ended the fight for the Filipino.

"He's a lot stronger than I thought," said Folayang, a 23-year-old fighter from Baguio City.

As the most impressive Asian Games drew to a close yesterday, the Filipinos had also collected six other silver and nine bronze medals for a total of 19, good for 18th place in the 45-nation competitions.

"We showed that we are capable of surpassing ourselves in these Asian Games," said PSC chair and *chef de mission* William "Butch" Ramirez. "As I said, we will win the gold medals in the latter part of the Games."

"All our athletes showed a strong will to fight and be victorious," said Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, president of the Philippine Olympic Committee. "*Hindi lang sila basta kasali, lahat gustong lumaban hanggang sa huli* (They were not mere participants, they fought to the very end)."

For the first time in eight rounds, all the chess players obtained the full point as Grandmaster-candidate Ronald Dableo, International Master Darwin Laylo and Jodera Docena whitewashed the Palestinians, 3-0, at the Khalifa complex.

The win boosted the Filipinos' total to 13 points going into last night's final round. They stood in sixth place, just half a point behind joint third Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Iran and Bangladesh.

Laylo outplayed Atta Taamra, Dableo whipped Talal Shoubita and Docena downed Shadia Jaradat.

Rexel Ryan Fabriga scored 410.40 points in the men's 10-meter platform preliminary and qualified to the finals along with Jaime Asok, who lay 11th with 350.90.

Maritess Bitbit missed the bronze in the women's points race to a Thai rider as the cyclists struggled at the Games' Aspire velodrome.

John Paul Morales figured in a four-man crash in the keirin race and sustained superficial injuries. National coach Jommel Lorenzo pulled Morales, who set a national record in an earlier race, out of the repechage.

Morales earlier wound up third and last in his semifinal group of the men's sprint with a time of 11.651 seconds.

In fencing, the squad of Wilfredo Vizcayno Jr., Almario Vizcayno and Avelino Victorino Jr. bested the Bahrainis, 45-31, before bowing to the Kazakhs, 24-45 in the men's team epee quarterfinals.

Wrestler Jerry Angana bowed to 2002 Busan Games champion Dilshod Mansurov of Uzbekistan, 0-3, in the preliminary of the men's 55-kilogram freestyle event and then lost to Japan's Hidenori Taoka in the repechage, 0-5.

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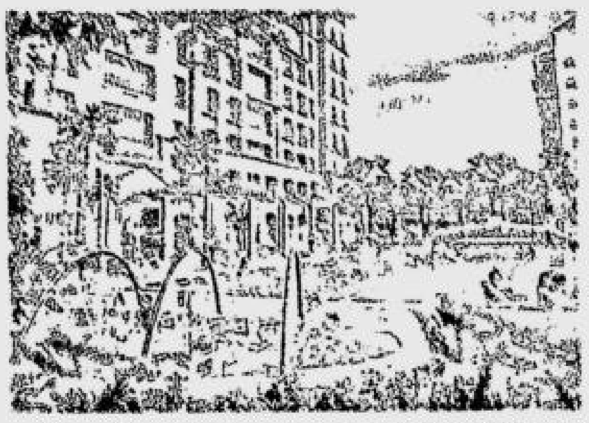

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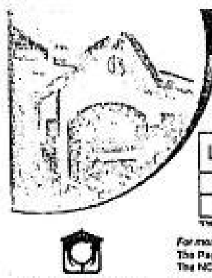

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No place to hide for suspect

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A BELGIAN FUGITIVE, WANTED in his home country for child abuse charges, was arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in front of the Belgian Embassy in Makati City last week.

Suspect Luc Van Hecke, 61, is currently detained at the NBI jail, according to the bureau's Interpol Division chief Claro de Castro Jr.

Special Investigator Sixto Espenesin Jr added that Van Hecke, described as "an incorrigible abuser of children," had been the subject of an intensive manhunt by the Belgian police.

In 1993, Van Hecke was sentenced to three years in prison for sexual abuse of children. He was again convicted last year for the same offense.

Espenesin said they received a tip from the Belgian police that Van Hecke was scheduled to visit the Belgian Embassy to sign notary papers on Dec. 8.

Van Hecke was arrested as he was about to leave the embassy on the same day, Espenesin said.

UP regents vote today on tuition hike

Studes, faculty to protest at lantern fete, Oblation Run

By DJ Yap

THE CONTROVERSIAL PROPOSAL to raise the tuition threefold at the state-run University of the Philippines will be decided today.

Protests against the proposal had put a damper on Christmas festivities in the Diliman campus.

University of Student Council (USC) chair Juan Paolo Alfonso called on students and teachers to join the protest, which would include "barricading" the administration building, while the Board of Regents meets to vote on the issue. The proposed 300-percent increase in tuition and miscellaneous fees for next school year's freshmen tops the agenda for the 12-member BOR.

The administration of UP president Emerlinda Roman sought, among other things, to increase from P300 to P1,000 the cost of an academic unit in the Diliman, Manila and Los Baños campuses; and from P200 to P600 in the Visayas, Baguio and Mindanao campuses.

Faculty regent Roland Simbulan said a simple majority was needed for the proposal to be approved, provided there was a quorum.

UP student and faculty leaders bewailed the holding of the meeting when the university was holding its annual Christmas celebration highlighted by the traditional Lantern Parade and Oblation Run.

In a press conference yesterday, they pointed out most students had gone home or were simply looking forward to enjoying Christmas.

But the groups, led by the USC and the offices of the student and faculty regents, still planned to hold a protest and demand the junking of the proposal.

Alfonso said the Lantern Parade would feature protest messages. The Oblation Run, which features a run around the campus by nude members of a fraternity, would also protest the proposal and moves to amend the Constitution, Alfonso added.

He compared the administration's campaign to implement the tuition increase to the failed bid of members of the House of Representatives to amend the 1987 Charter through a constituent assembly.

The administration said the increase would help improve UP's financial viability, considering that the rates had not been adjusted since 1989.

Officials also said the increase would not affect indigent students as the revised Socialized Tuition Financial Assistance Program would ensure they would not pay tuition and would receive stipends of up to P12,000 per semester.

Roman also promised more student assistantships and scholarships for poor but deserving students through the help of government institutions and the private sector.

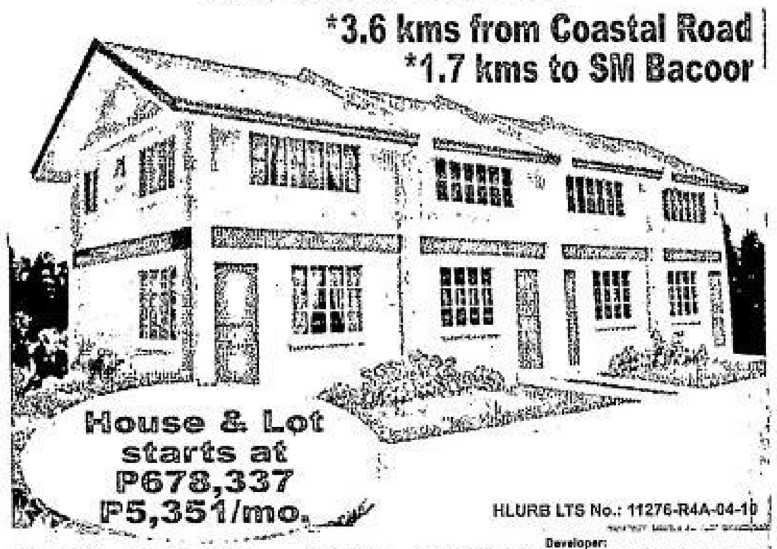
Among members of the BOR, only Simbulan and student regent Raffy Jones Sanchez have publicly expressed opposition to the proposal.

Simbulan said that contrary to the administration's claim, many students would still bear the burden of the tuition hike, since only a few of them would be included in the lowest STFAP bracket.

"Students who don't pay tuition now will have to pay under the new STFAP scheme," he said.

Simbulan added that the university would lose its character as a state university once it imposes the tuition hike.

"It will pave the way for the UP to become a private university with scholars," said Judy Taguiwalo, president of the All-UP Academic Employees Union.



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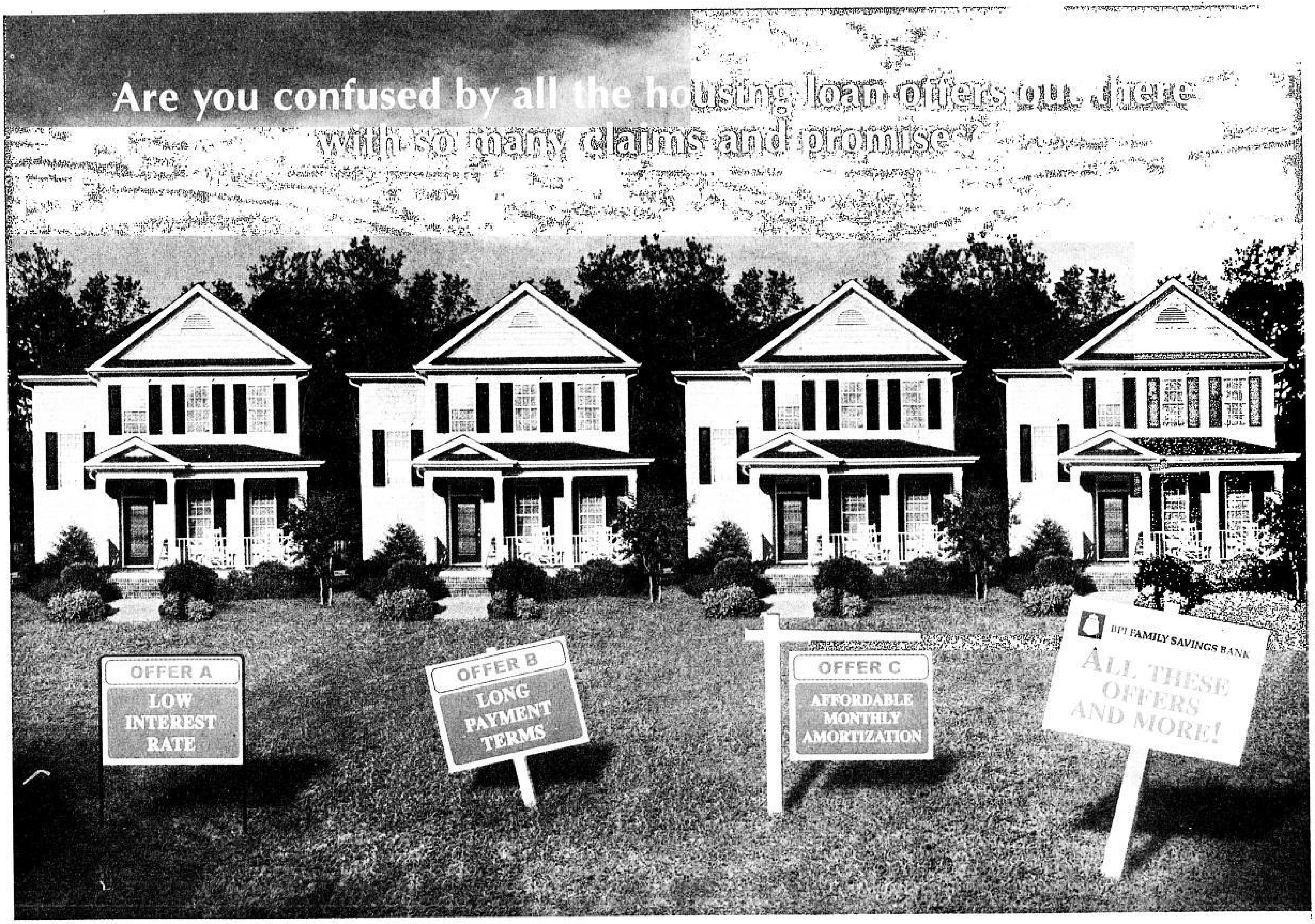
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Free legal services for policemen

By Nancy C. Carvajal

MALABON CITY POLICEMEN can now avail of free legal services in case charges are filed against them in the line of duty, the city's top police official said.

"Like anyone else, policemen also need protection from anyone but this they do not have to spend for because it would be provided to them for free " Supt. Ramon de Jesus told the INQUIRER yesterday.

De Jesus said the Malabon policemen would be the first law enforcers in the country to have their own lawyer holding office inside their headquarters, making legal assistance available to them all hours of the day.

He said the Integrated Bar of the Philippines had entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Philippine National Police to provide the services of its members to policemen who had been charged in the line of duty.

Because of the paperwork involved and the sheer number of policemen seeking legal help it usually takes time before requests for lawyers are granted.

In almost all cases, accused policemen had to spend their own money to get a lawyer to defend them, De Jesus said.

"It is a burden to a policemen especially those who are wrongly accused," he added.

Apart from legal assistance with official and personal cases, De Jesus said the legal office could also act as coach and adviser to policemen who have to testify in courts.

Police confirm bomb planted in Jaworski's van

By Jocelyn R. Uy

AN IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE device caused the blast that destroyed Pasig Rep. Robert "Dodot" Jaworksi's Toyota Innova on Tuesday.

This was confirmed yesterday by the task force investigating the case.

Tests conducted on debris gathered from the explosion site by personnel of the Bomb Data Center in Camp Crame were positive for nitrate, an ingredient for explosive devices, according to Pasig police chief Senior Supt. Francisco Uyami Jr.

"Our scene of the crime operatives described the bomb as a low explosive," he told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Jaworksi had just come from a wake in Barangay Pineda when the explosion occurred along C-5 Road in Barangay Ugong.

The congressman, with his brother Ryan, who was driving the 6-month-old Toyota Innova, and bodyguard Romy Gamosa rushed out of the car after hearing "something explode."

A few moments later, the vehicle was consumed by flames.

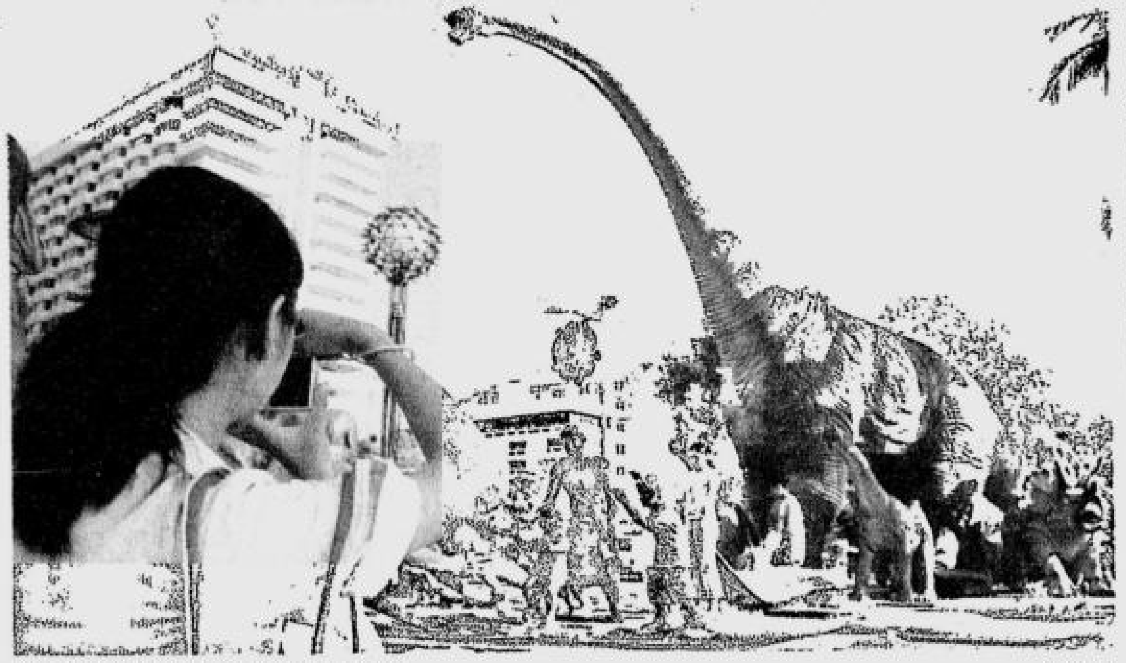
Investigators said the improvised bomb was planted under the front passenger seat. Earlier, they found a hole in the seat caused by the explosion.

The right side of the vehicle's chassis was also damaged.

Chief Supt. Luizo Ticman, Eastern Police district director, said nitrate could also be found in matches, firecrackers, batteries and even fertilizers.

But he confirmed that the explosion that nearly killed Jaworksi was caused by a bomb.

Uyami said the investigating team was working with four witnesses, who were in the area where Jaworksi parked his car when he went to the wake, to identify the suspects.



DINOSAURS AT BAYWALK RYAN LIM

A favorite subject for both amateur and professional photographers are these dinosaur statues at the Baywalk along Roxas Boulevard in Manila.

Psychic helping police solve murder of lawyer, son

By Jocelyn R. Uy

POLICE ARE SEEKING THE HELP even of psychics as they continue to face a blank wall in the investigation of the murder of Assistant Solicitor General Nestor Ballocillo and his 23-year-old son Benedict.

Mystery

"We are doing our best to solve the case. We have also sought the assistance of psychics in solving the mystery," Southern Police District director Chief Supt. Roberto Rosales told reporters yesterday.

The Ballocillos were on their way to Nestor's office in Makati City last Dec. 6 when two armed men shot them at close range.

Work-related ?

The Parañaque police and the National Bureau of Investigation said earlier the killing could be work-related.

At a press conference yesterday, Rosales said a colleague from Camp Crame had introduced him to a psychic, whose name was withheld for security purposes.

The psychic volunteered to help solve the case, asking the police director for basic details.

"I was asked to give the name and birthdays of the victims," Rosales said.

TV shows

He accepted the offer after having seen on television how the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States was assisted by psychics and clairvoyants in crime detection and investigation, he added.

Foreign intelligence and police agencies have started to tap people with psychic capabilities for help in resolving puzzling crimes.

Names

Rosales said the psychic had already provided names that could help identify the gunman and his location.

Leads

He said the information would be compared to results of the investigation conducted so far through conventional means.

"The psychic's findings would just help provide the leads. We will still rely on the scientific findings. But it would be helpful if the psychic's information corroborate our investigation," he said.

Double time

Meanwhile, Parañaque City police chief Supt. Ronald Estilles said they were working double time to capture the killers.

Estilles told the INQUIRER yesterday that five witnesses were ready to identify the suspects.

METROBRIEFS

PWU honors Korean educator today

THE PHILIPPINE Women's University will confer an honorary degree on Kee Il-lyu, president of the Far East University of Seoul, Korea in a special academic convocation today at the Conrado Benitez Hall, Taft Avenue campus, Manila. Chair Dr. Carlito S. Puno of the Commission on Higher Education and PWU chairperson Dr. Helena Z. Benitez will lead the conferment rites, assisted by president Dr. Amelou B. Reyes, while board vice chair Dr. Manuel Alba will read the citation. The Far East University ranks number one among Korean universities in the development of a cyber-based program for students.

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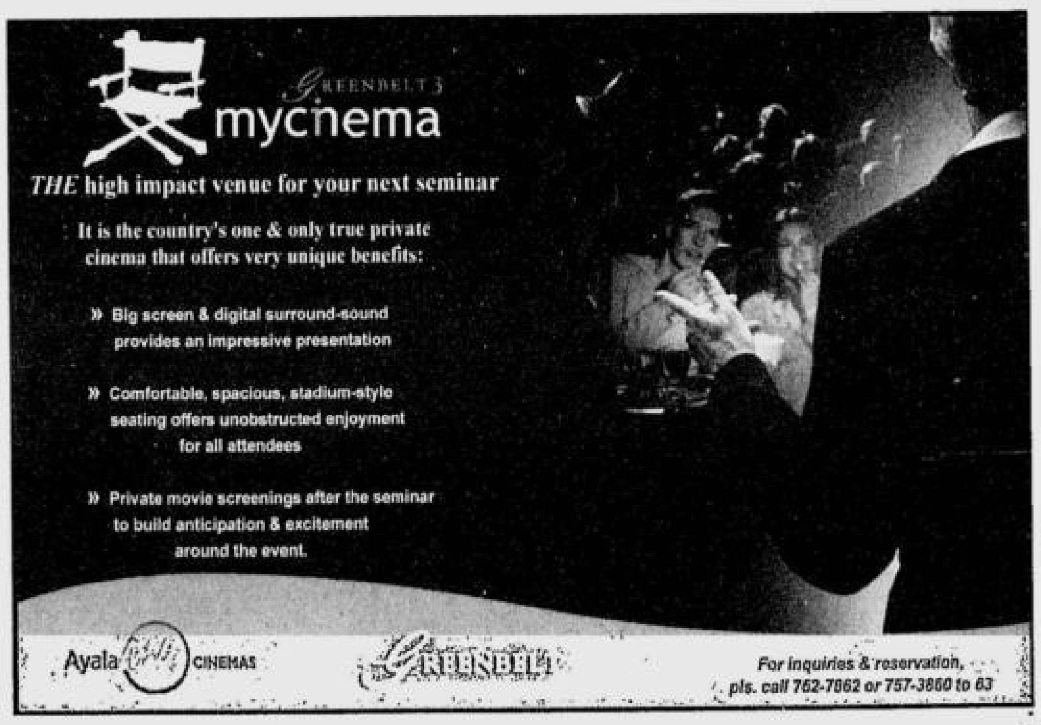

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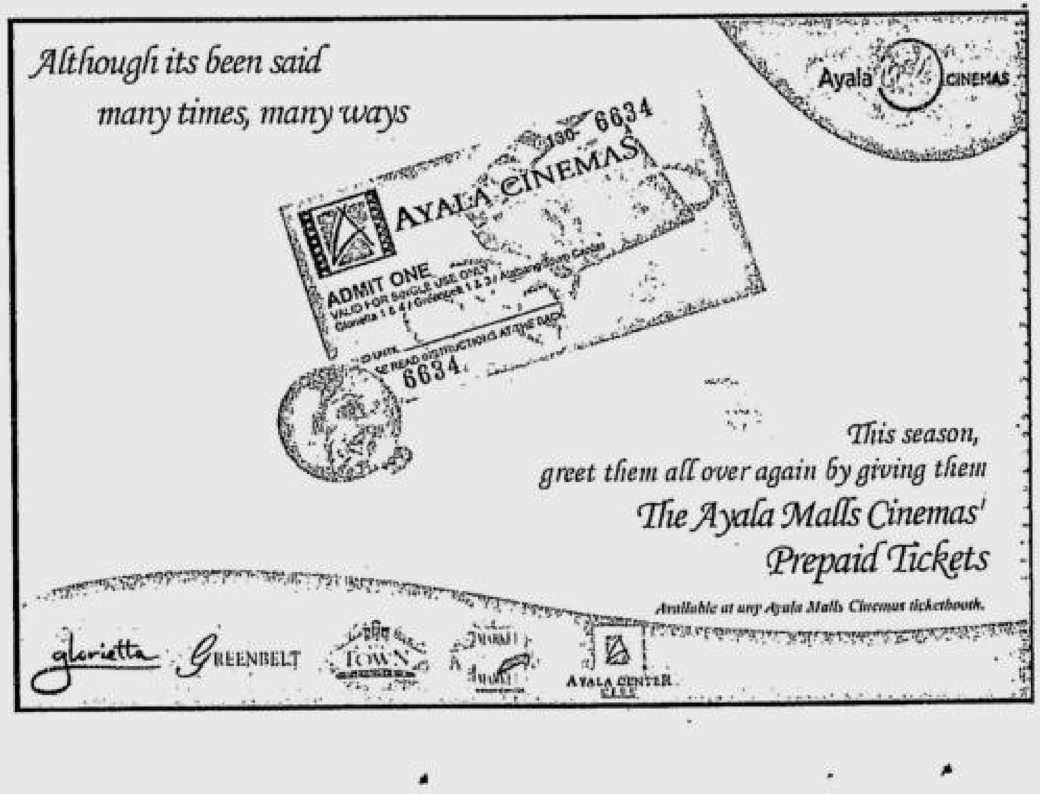

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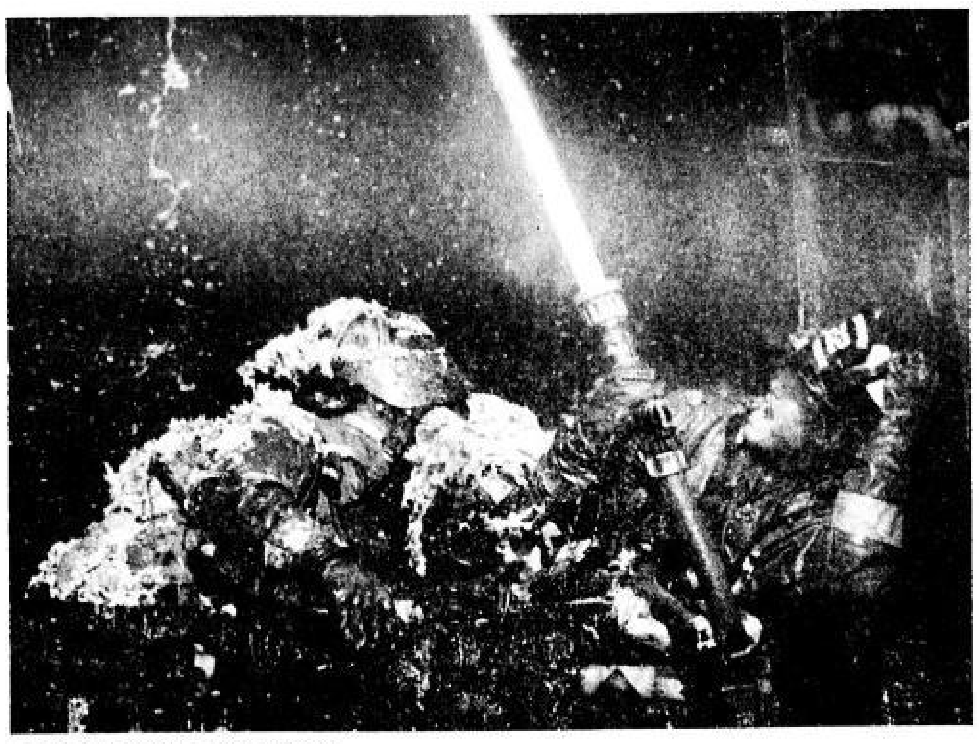


ART OF FIREFIGHTING
A rainbow is formed from water mist as firefighters, covered in attic insulation, fight a fire in a vacant house on Cleveland's east side Dec. 13. AP

Illegals targeted in US crackdown on stolen IDs

WASHINGTON—HOMELAND SECURITY Secretary Michael Chertoff on Wednesday announced a broad new plan to crack down on illegal immigrants who steal the identities of US citizens to get jobs. The strategy, he warned, would likely have economic consequences for the industries that rely heavily on illegal workers.

The announcement came one day after federal agents swept into Swift & Co. meatpacking plants in six states and arrested nearly 1,300 workers, almost 10 percent of the company's workforce, in what Chertoff called as the largest workplace crackdown on illegal immigration.

Of the 1,282 workers detained, 65 were charged with identity theft or other crimes, officials said. The rest face administrative charges for being in the United States illegally and will likely be deported. The company, which cooperated with the government, was not charged with any criminal or civil violations.

Chertoff said the workers used the stolen identities of hundreds of US citizens to prove to Swift & Co. that they were allowed to work in the United States. And he warned that he intended to aggressively pursue document-theft rings and the illegal immigrant workers who use them, even though he acknowledged "when we remove the illegal workers, there's going to be some kind of a slowdown."

The news sent shudders through the nation's businesses because Swift & Co., the world's second largest processor of fresh beef and pork, had tried to weed out illegal workers and had relied on a federal program designed to help employers detect fake identity documents. Chertoff acknowledged Wednesday that the program, known as Basic Pilot, is unable to detect authentic identity documents that have been stolen.

In a statement, Swift & Co. executives said the raids had forced the company to temporarily suspend operations on Tuesday in its plants in Texas, Colorado, Nebraska, Minnesota, Iowa and Utah. They said work resumed Wednesday, but they warned that production was expected to fall "below normal levels in the short term."

New York Times News Serivce

Circumcision lowers AIDS risk, says study

CIRCUMCISION APPEARS TO REDUCE A man's risk of contracting AIDS from heterosexual sex by half, US government health officials said Wednesday, after stopping two clinical trials in Africa because circumcision was working so well that continuing trials would be unethical.

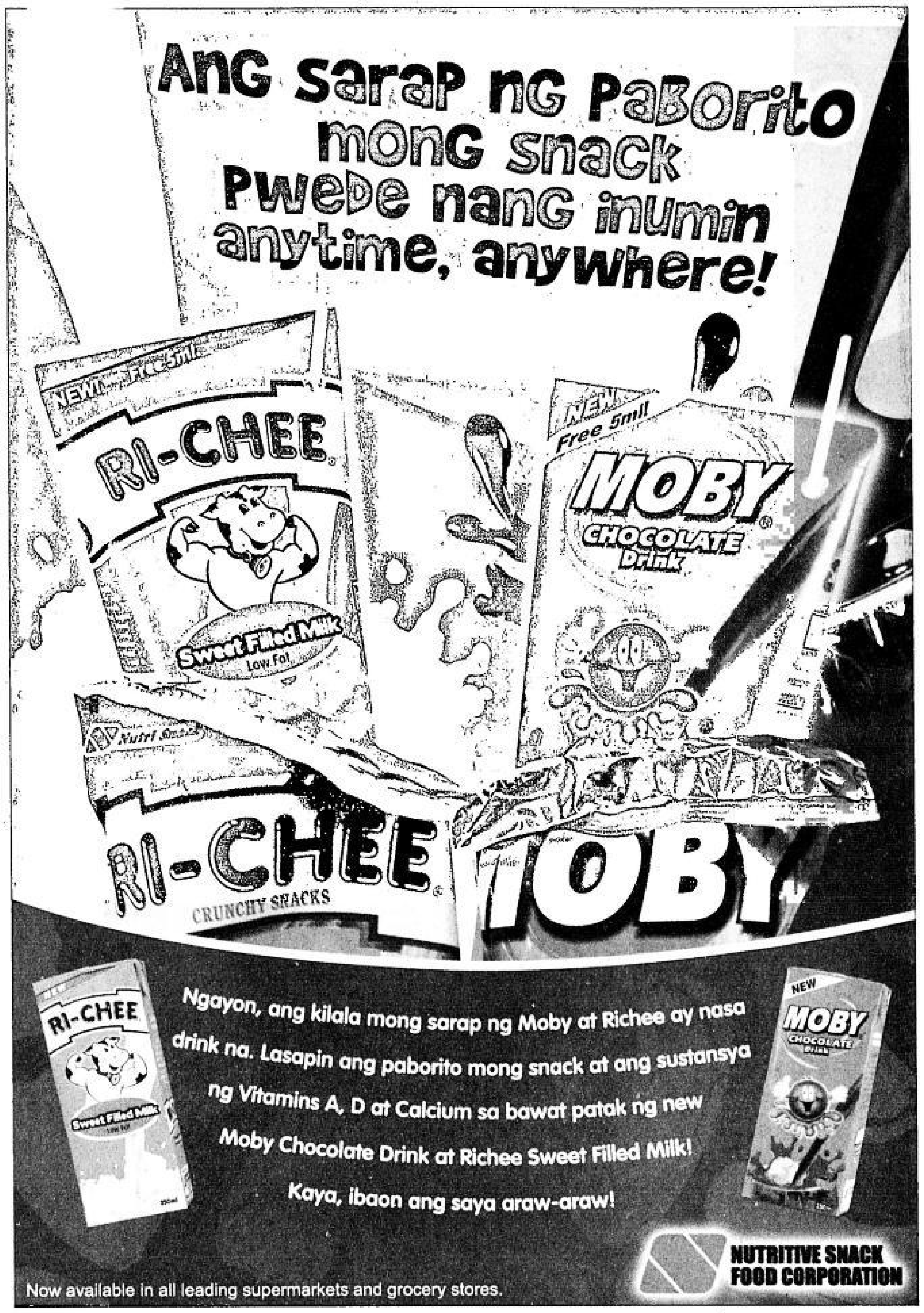
AIDS experts immediately hailed the finding, and the directors of the US and international funds for fighting the disease said they would now consider paying for circumcisions.

"This is very exciting news," said Daniel Halperin, an HIV specialist at the Harvard Center for Population and Development, who has argued in scientific journals for years that circumcision slows the spread of AIDS in the parts of Africa where it is common.

Uncircumcised men are thought to be more susceptible because the underside of the foreskin is rich in Langerhans cells, sentinel cells of the immune system, which attach easily to the human immunodeficiency virus, which causes AIDS. The foreskin also often suffers small tears during intercourse.

But experts also cautioned that circumcision is no cure-all. It only lessens the chances that a man will catch the virus; it is expensive compared to condoms, abstinence or other methods; and the surgery has serious risks if it is performed by folk healers using dirty blades, as often happens in rural Africa.

The two trials, conducted by researchers from universities in Illinois, Maryland, Canada, Uganda and Kenya, involved nearly 3,000 heterosexual men in Kisumu, Kenya, and nearly 5,000 in Rakai, Uganda. *NYT*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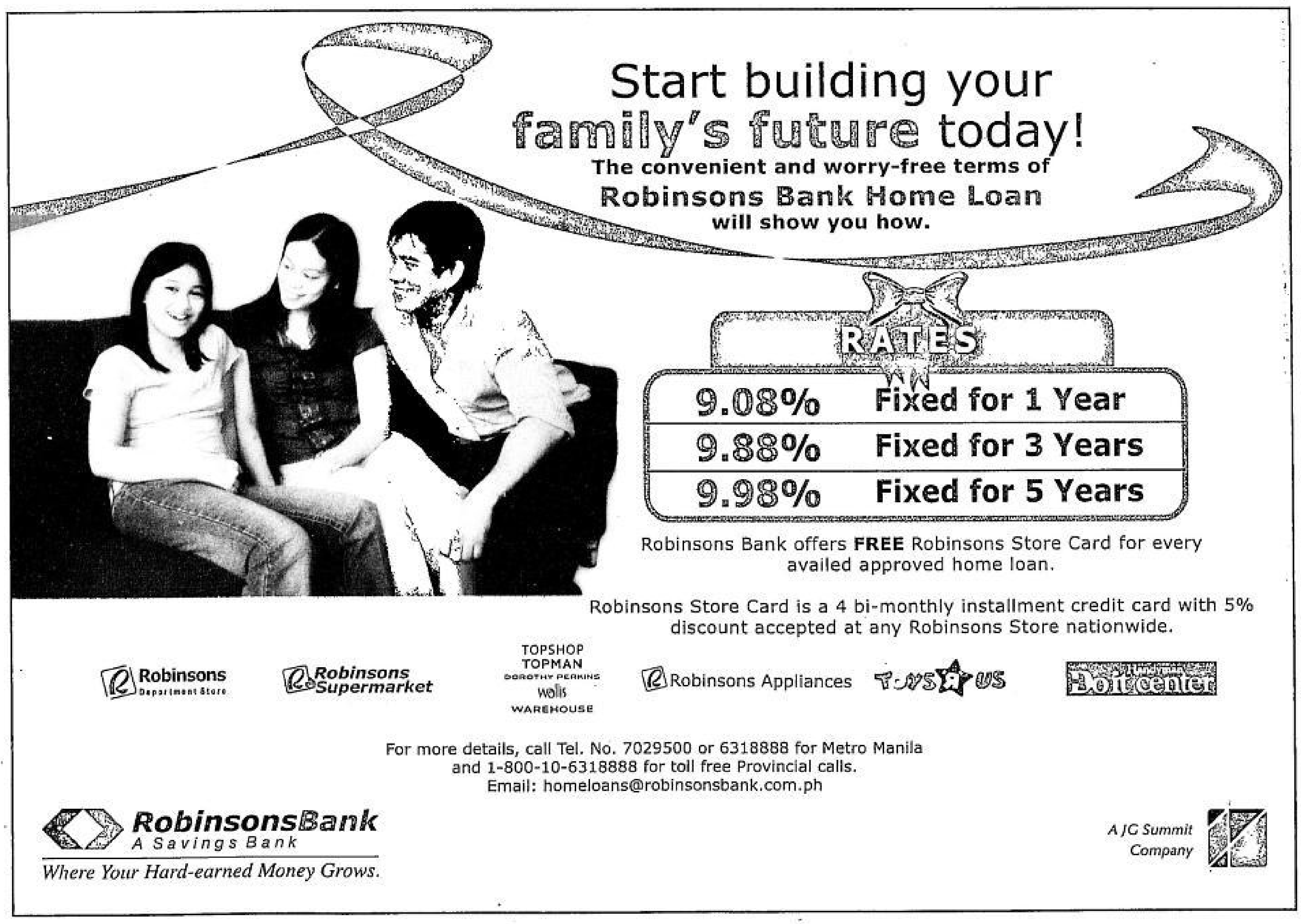
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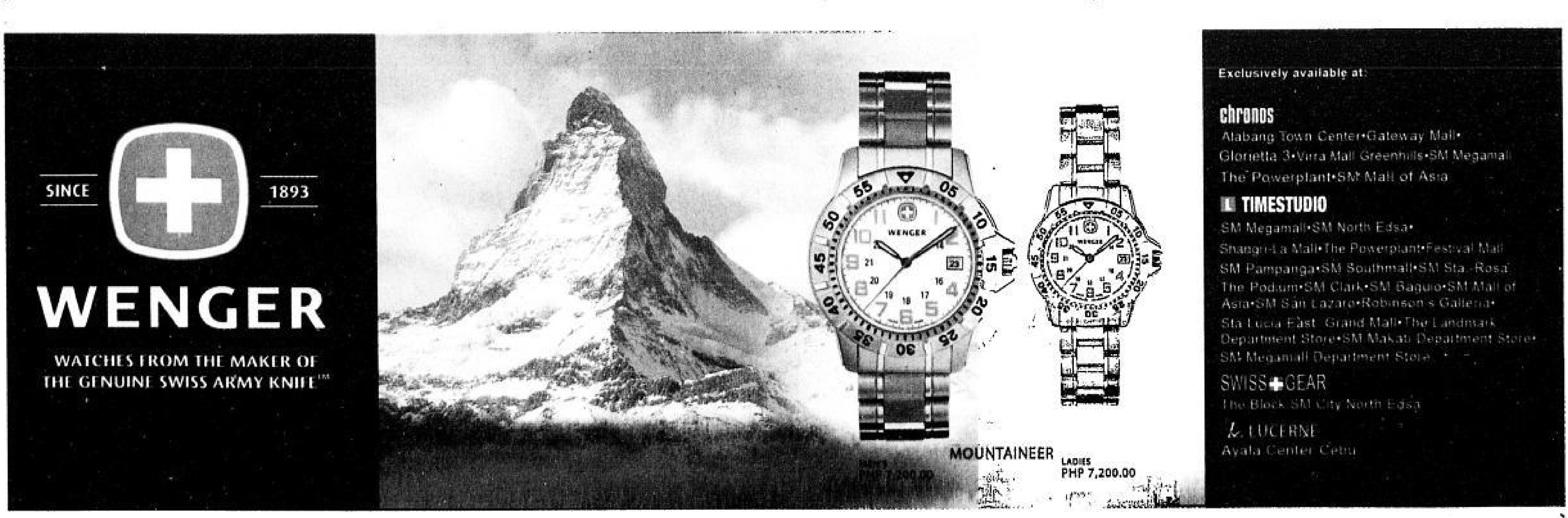
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Car bombings, shootings kill 37 across Iraq

BAGHDAD—IRAQI LEADERS discussed the latest in a long line of new security plans for Baghdad on Wednesday as bombs and shootings killed 37 people across the country in the run-up to national unity talks.

Multiple car bombs in Shiite districts and a truck bomb in the north targeting Iraqi soldiers guarding oil pipelines claimed 20 lives alone during another violence-torn day.

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki told a visiting delegation of US legislators led by Arizona Senator John McCain that his government had a new security plan to protect the capital and the rest of the country.

The government requires "more arms for the Iraqi army, more powers and training in order to be capable of handling security missions all over the country," he told the delegation, his office said.

Maliki's National Security Advisor Muwaffaq al-Rubaie told journalists the new plan involved a swifter transition from US troops to Iraqi forces.

US forces would move to the outskirts of the cities to combat al-Qaida insurgents, while the Iraqis would handle the raging sectarian conflict tearing Baghdad apart.

"The coalition forces should not get involved in sectarian violence—this is a job for the Iraqi security forces to do," he told CNN.

With latest polls indicating that only 15 percent of Americans believe the war can be won, President George W. Bush is under pressure to change the course of the United States' three-and-a-half year old adventure in Iraq.

On Tuesday, the White House said Bush would unveil a new Iraq strategy in January, but Rubaie's announcement indicates the change may already be under way.

However, many people in Iraq fear the result of an overly swift transition to Iraqi forces, especially since many are believed to have already taken sides in the sectarian conflict raging across the capital.

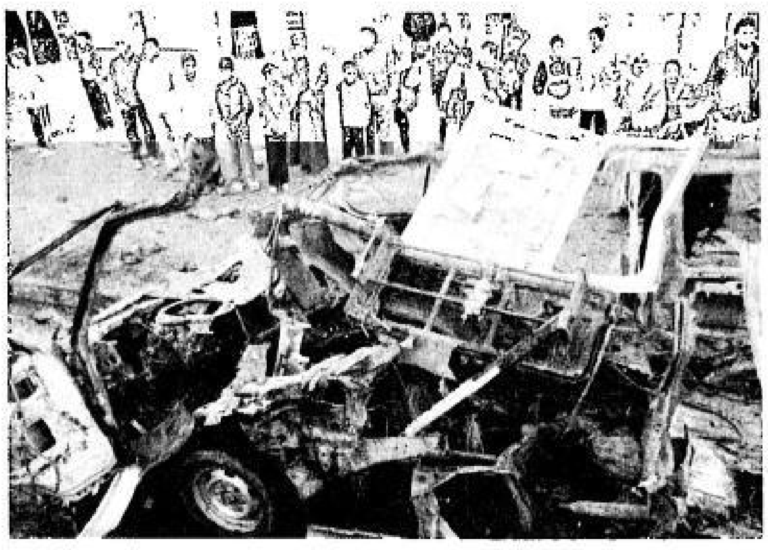
US spokesperson Major General William Caldwell said American forces would remain as advisors with Iraqi forces to train them and, more importantly, ensure they remain neutral.

"Their real purpose is to provide leadership, mentoring and coaching, but they in fact will be able to observe what we call professionalism to make sure (the Iraqis) are not acting in a sectarian manner out there," he said.

As part of the transition, more and more US combat forces would be turned into transition teams accompanying Iraqi forces, he said, citing recent successes in northern Iraq.

Ultimately, however, Caldwell insisted that more effort was needed by Iraqi political leaders to stem the violence.

"Until that political process gets more engaged, we are not going to see a turn in the levels of violence," he said. *AFP*



IRAQIS gather around a vehicle destroyed in a car bomb blast in Baghdad's Shiite slum of Sadr City, Iraq, Dec. 14. AP

Army sacks grandson of Pinochet over remarks

LATE CHILEAN DICTATOR AUgusto Pinochet's grandson has been discharged from the army because of his remarks defending the 1973 military coup that brought his grandfather to power, army commander General Oscar Izurieta said Wednesday.

"He was told about his very serious fault and that he was being discharged," said Izurieta.

At Pinochet's funeral on Tuesday, Augusto Pinochet Molina, 33, praised his grandfather for overthrowing the elected Socialist government of president Salvador Allende in an army uprising rather than through elections.

His comments drew outrage from the Socialist government and President Michelle Bachelet, who along with her mother and father was tortured under the Pinochet regime, on Wednesday called for the army to punish him for his error.

"This is a grave error and we are certain that the army will know what to do," Bachelet said earlier Wednesday.

Izurieta made the announcement shortly before presiding over a graduation ceremony for army officers which Bachelet was also expected to attend.

The ceremony was held at Santiago's Military School where Pinochet's funeral took place and where his grandson made his controversial remarks, which included a strong criticism of the judges who went after his grandfather for alleged human rights violations and fraud during his 1973-1990 regime.

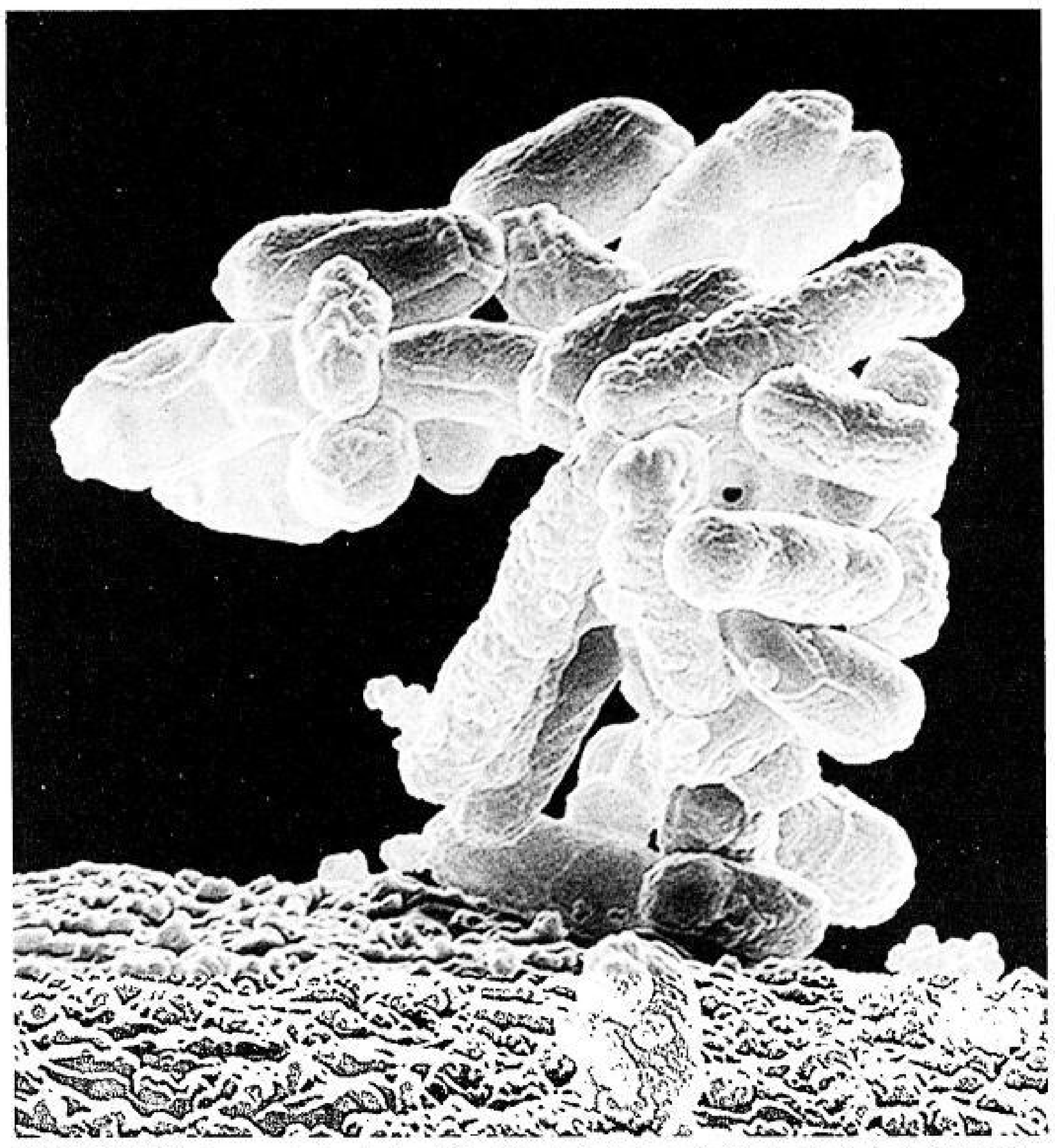
Pinochet died on Sunday one week after suffering a heart attack and two weeks after his 91st birthday.

"He was a man who defeated at the height of the Cold War the Marxist model, which tried to impose its totalitarian model not by vote, but more directly by force of arms," Pinochet Molina said at the funeral.

He also said that in his late years Pinochet and his family had been humiliated by judges "who were seeking more fame than justice." That statement drew an immediate condemnation from Defense Minister Vivianne Blanlot, who attended the rites as the official government representative after Bachelet had rejected a state funeral for Pinochet.

After Bachelet urged swift punishment from the military establishment, Pinochet Molina's father told a radio station that his son was thinking of leaving the military voluntarily.

The controversy over Pinochet Molina's remarks underscored the sharp divide which remains in Chile three days after Pinochet, who ruled Chile with an iron hand from 1973-1990. *AFP*



AN ELECTRON micrograph of a cluster of E. coli bacteria is shown in this undated photo. Renewed confusion surrounding the source of an E. coli outbreak linked to Taco Bell will make it harder for the restaurant chain to reassure customers that its food is safe. REUTERS

Fast colon exams miss cancer signs

BOSTON—DOCTORS WHO too quickly examine a colon for early signs of cancer miss more than half the abnormalities, a study of 2,053 patients undergoing their first colonoscopy showed on Wednesday.

In the test, doctors threaded a flexible lighted tube with a camera at the end—called a colonoscope—through the colon and then pulled back slowly to look for problems.

The researchers found that when a doctor typically took less than six minutes to withdraw the tube, the chance of detecting an abnormality fell to 11.8 percent, down from 28.3 percent among doctors who took more time.

And of the nine malignant tumors that were found in the study, only one was discovered by a doctor who typically took less than six minutes to scan the colon. Experts have suggested that six minutes is the minimum withdrawal time necessary for a thorough exam.

The research in The New England Journal of Medicine was an opportunity to assess, under everyday conditions, the performance of colonoscopies, which are increasingly common thanks to their ability to dramatically reduce the risk of dying of colon cancer.

"Our study suggests even taking a small amount more time would translate into more polyps (found) and potentially more important polyps that have a higher risk of developing into cancer," chief author Robert Barclay told Reuters.

The study, which involved Barclay's private practice, Rockford Gastroenterology Associates in Rockford, Illinois, found that the doctor who took three minutes for a typical exam found just one adenoma—a bump on the colon lining that might become cancerous—for every 10 patients.

The specialist who usually took about 17 minutes found 10 times as many adenomas. *Reuters*

Chinese tycoon buys most expensive Rolls

HONG KONG—THE MOST EXpensive Rolls-Royce super-luxury car ever made has just been sold to a Chinese property developer in Beijing, the legendary marque's chair Ian Robertson said Thursday.

The $2.2 million built-to-order stretch Rolls-Royce Phantom boasts state-of-the art gadgets including an LCD entertainment system. It also has two rows of rear seats, facing each other.

"It was the most expensive car we've ever done," said Robertson, in Hong Kong for the unveiling of a fleet of 14 new Phantoms at the city's Peninsula Hotel.

Robertson wouldn't disclose the name of the buyer.

China has overtaken Japan as Rolls-Royce's biggest Asian market, with sales growth this year of 60 percent driven by the country's newly-rich entrepreneurs splashing out on the trappings of wealth. *AFP*

A "FLYING LADY" hood ornament on a new Rolls-Royce Phantom. AP

Rumsfeld ends 50 years of service in ignominy

RUMSFELD AP

WASHINGTON—History seems to be in a hurry to judge outgoing Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld.

He began to write his own history well before his pending departure as defense secretary with what has amounted to a series of farewell tours and parting ruminations drawing together a career in public service that spans half a century.

Others began writing his history even earlier, and it is harsh, thanks to Iraq.

Ex-generals asserted he was a failure months before his continued service became untenable, an extraordinary airing of protest. Then came a clamor from Democrats and some Republicans for President George W. Bush to show the door to a man who served three presidents back to Richard Nixon. Rumsfeld leaves the Pentagon on Monday after nearly six years on the job.

Fairly or not, he is the public face of a war gone bad.

The primary knocks against him are that he resisted sending enough troops to Iraq, that he was in denial about the likelihood—and then the existence—of an insurgency after Saddam Hussein was brought down, and that he threw out a war plan and went with a flawed one.

"I think his epitaph will be a dark one," said Justin Logan, a foreign policy analyst with the libertarian Cato Institute. "Rumsfeld's one-line epitaph will be, 'The man who was at the helm of the Defense Department and supported what was doomed to be a losing war effort that Americans will remember as a national tragedy.'"

Rumsfeld was hardly alone in a national security apparatus that did not see the ferocity of the Iraqi insurgency coming, and prepare for it. Does that make him a scapegoat?

"He was the primary architect of the war plan," said military analyst Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution. "He was no scapegoat. He deserves the blame he received."

Bullheaded and square-jawed, Rumsfeld is also courtly in an old-fashioned way, one of the qualities that made him seem like a man from a different age. He is given to exclamations like "by golly" and "my goodness."

At 74, Rumsfeld, a former Navy aviator, is the oldest defense secretary in US history. He became the youngest one in history when he began his first stint as defense chief in 1975. He is the only person to have held the position twice.

And he will fall 10 days short of becoming the longest-serving ever, a distinction held by Vietnam-era Robert S. McNamara, who left under a cloud of another war gone wrong.

At the height of his power and popularity, Rumsfeld riveted the public with his expansive war briefings, exhibiting an outsized personality that seemed all of a piece with the bold strokes of a military machine rolling up successes in Afghanistan and then Iraq.

He could be dismissive. "Life's hard," he said when members of Congress complained that he did not give due regard to their concerns. But he could choke up over the sacrifice of the troops.

He seemed to be thinking out loud, in public, a startling thing for anyone in public life in Washington to do.

He would think out loud about how Osama bin Laden might escape, which he did.

Then he would put himself in the mind of a terrorist, imagining what must go through a killer's head in deciding whether to keep killing or do something else.

"It's when a person gets up in the morning and says it's not worth it," Rumsfeld mused. "'I'm either dead or I'm wounded or there is no place to go or I don't have food, and I can't get anyone on the telephone, and I don't know what to do next.'"

It turned out insurgents in Iraq decided it was worth it.

The toll to date is 2,939 US military personnel dead, and Iraqis getting up in the morning to the near certainty of bloodshed that will kill dozens or scores or more by the end of the day.

Beyond the loyal cadre under and around him, Rumsfeld finishes his service with few defenders. To those who opposed the war or came to be against it, he is one among many who deserve blame. He can't win either, among those who continue to believe the war was just.

"They will argue the decision to invade was a good one, the Bush doctrine was sound, but flawed execution by Rumsfeld doomed the enterprise," Logan said.

In sizing up what he hopes new Defense Secretary Robert Gates will bring to the job that Rumsfeld did not, military analyst Loren Thompson of the Lexington Institute mentioned humility.

"Donald Rumsfeld liked to carry a list of priorities in his pocket," Thompson said in a retrospective on the defense chief. "There were 10 of them, and they were very ambitious—items like 'transform the joint force' and 'optimize intelligence capabilities.'

"Unfortunately, 'learn to get along with Congress' wasn't one of them. 'Treat the officer corps with respect' wasn't either," Thompson said. AP

A MEMBER of the Bushmen community follows proceedings inside the court in Lobatse, Botswana, Dec. 13. REUTERS

Court: Bushmen have right to return to Kalahari

LOBATSE, BOTSWANA—HUNdreds of San Bushmen were wrongly forced from their Kalahari desert homeland and should be allowed to return to their ancient hunting ground, a court in Botswana ruled Wednesday.

In a majority verdict, a panel of three judges ruled the Botswana government had not acted unlawfully when cutting off vital supplies to the Bushmen in the Kalahari desert but had failed to hold adequate consultations with them beforehand and had no right to subsequently deny them permission to return.

Lawyers for the Bushmen reacted to the verdict with delight, saying their years-long battle for justice had been finally vindicated after presiding judge Maruping Dibotelo delivered the verdict in the city of Lobatse.

"Prior to Jan. 31, 2002, the applicants were in possession of the land which they lawfully occupied in the CKGR (central Kalahari game reserve)," Dibotelo told the court.

"The applicants were deprived of such possessions forcibly or wrongly and without their consent."

The government's subsequent refusal to allow the Bushmen a permit to return to their land "is unlawful and unconstitutional," the judge added.

Since a group of around 200 indigenous Bushmen first filed an application in April 2002 challenging their eviction from a game reserve, the case has become a cause celebre with the applicants gathering the backing of celebrities including Nobel laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu and film star Colin Firth.

The case was thrown out on a technicality but the high court agreed in 2004 to hear the complaint.

The Bushmen maintain they were driven out of the Kalahari to make way for diamond mining, a claim the world's top diamond producer has denied.

Once numbering millions, roughly 100,000 San are left in southern Africa, with almost half of them—48,000—in Botswana. *AFP*

TV REPAIRMAN IN SPACE

Space shuttle Discovery astronaut Robert L. Curbeam, Jr. prepares to replace a faulty television camera on the exterior of the international space station during the mission's first of three planned sessions of extravehicular activity (EVA), Dec. 12. AP

UK PROSTITUTE MURDERS

Police study clothing

LONDON—BRITISH POLICE were examining items of clothing on Thursday for possible links to the murders of five women, as the mother of a prostitute killed 14 years ago said she could have been the serial killer's first victim.

A massive manhunt is underway across the eastern English port town of Ipswich after the discovery of five naked bodies.

Detective Chief Superintendent Stewart Gull said police would on Thursday reveal the results of a post-mortem examination on one of the victims and hopefully her identity.

A second body was still being examined. Police said they feared the two most recent corpses, discovered on Tuesday, may be of prostitutes who had been reported missing.

Paula Clennell, 24, has not been seen since Saturday and Annette Nicholls, 29, has been missing for at least a week.

Detectives have confirmed that three of the dead women were sex workers.

Gull said clothing had been found in different locations across Ipswich. "We will now take our time to analyze that and see if it is of any relevance," he told BBC News.

"Clearly we are still looking for confirmed sightings of where the girls were and what they were actually wearing."

One woman still working the streets in Ipswich's red-light district was quoted in several newspapers as saying she saw the killer's third victim, Anneli Alderton, being driven off last Thursday in a blue BMW.

"A blue BMW went into the car park and Anneli went up to it and got in and it drove out," the woman, named simply as Lou, was quoted in the Daily Telegraph as saying. "The driver was chubby, with glasses and dark hair."

A police spokesperson was not immediately available to comment.

In a further twist, Lin Pearman, whose 16-year-old daughter Natalie was murdered in 1992, told the Daily Mail there could be a link to the latest spate of killings. *Reuters*

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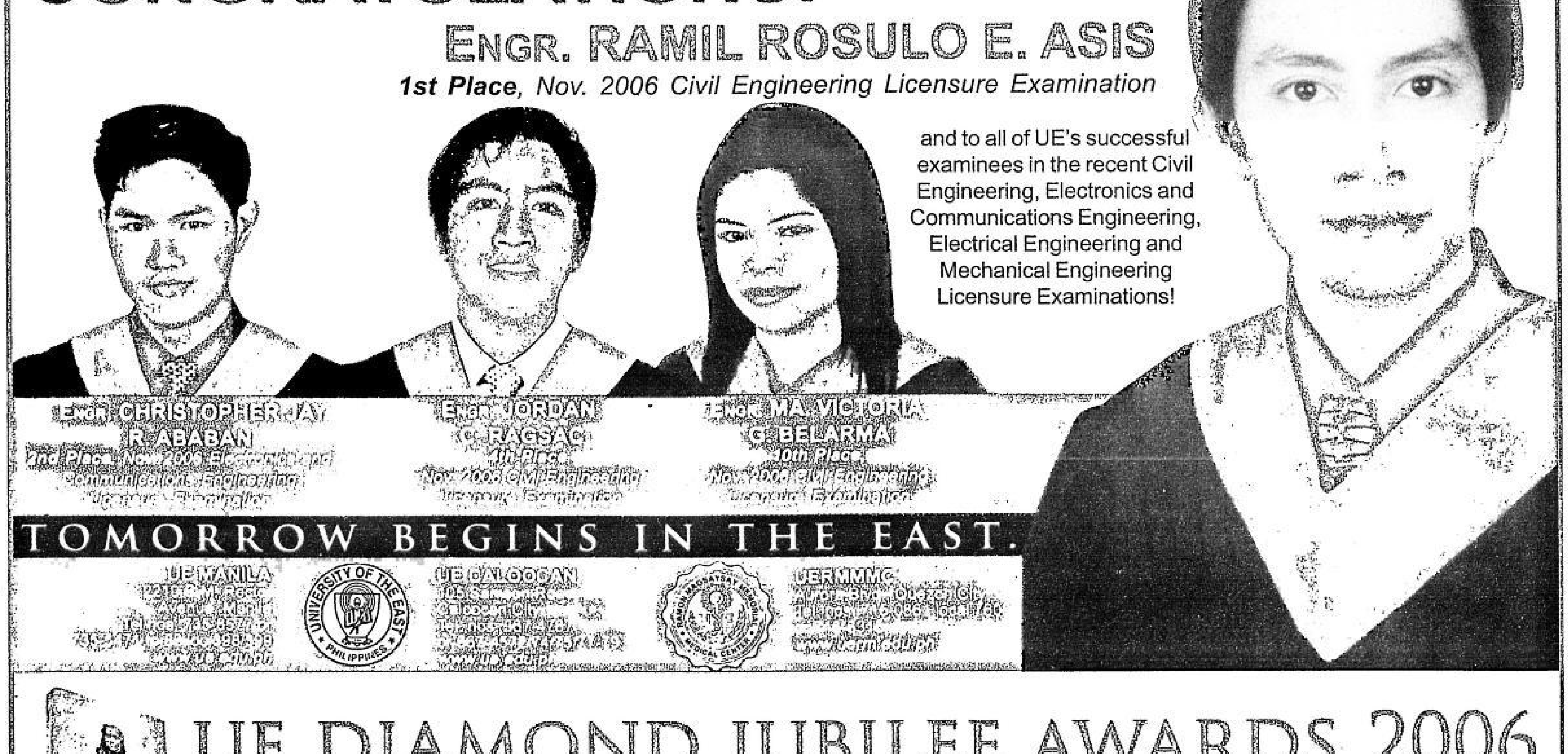
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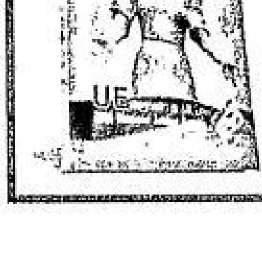

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

US, UK may enforce Darfur no-fly zone

WASHINGTON—THE US AND BRITAIN ARE considering enforcing a no-fly zone over Sudan's war-torn Darfur region if the Khartoum government does not allow a UN-led peacekeeping force in, the State Department said Wednesday.

Blair raised the no-fly zone option during a meeting here last week with US President George W. Bush and amid growing frustration with Sudan's refusal to comply with past agreements on the peacekeepers' deployment, department spokesperson Sean McCormack said.

"Prime Minister Blair talked about it as an idea," McCormack said of the no-fly zone, which would aim to halt the use of Sudanese government planes and helicopters to support attacks on villages in Darfur.

He said Bush was very concerned about a resurgence of violence in the vast western Sudanese region, where more than 200,000 people have been killed and 2.5 million displaced during nearly four years of fighting between ethnic African rebels and militia allied to the Arab-led government in Khartoum.

"The president is going to consider what options he thinks are necessary in order to address the grave situation there," McCormack said, adding that the move to consider tougher measures was motivated by a "lack of forward movement on the diplomacy right now combined with an uptick in violence" in Darfur.

The Financial Times reported earlier Wednesday that Blair had urged Bush to take coercive steps against Khartoum and that options under consideration by the US administration included air strikes and a naval blockade—measures advocated by some human rights groups and former US officials.

McCormack said the newspaper report was "way out ahead" of any actual planning for military action and stressed that "our focus right now is on diplomatic means." But if the violence continues and Sudan persists in its refusal to implement peacekeeping agreements, "then of course the international community has to consider other options," he said.

"The violence has to stop and the humanitarian situation needs to be addressed." A US- and British-led push for military action in Muslim Sudan less than four years after the invasion of Iraq could face significant opposition from Arab states and in the UN Security Council, where China—which buys most of Sudan's oil—holds veto power.

Past UN resolutions on Darfur have included provisions barring Sudan from using its military aviation in the region, though they did not explicitly allow for imposition of a no-fly zone.

Bush's special envoy to Sudan, Andrew Natsios, met with President Omar al-Beshir in Khartoum Wednesday and said the two had agreed on steps "that may make some progress" in improving security in Darfur. *AFP*

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WELL, SHE THINKS IT'S COOL A demonstrator who identified herself as Xochitl watches a mock crucifixion to protest discrimination against people with tattoos in Mexico City, Dec. 13. She complained of suffering discrimination because she had decorated her back with scarification, a pattern of decorative scars made with a scalpel. AP

Video shows Dodi getting 'Diana ring' before crash

PARIS—AN EXCLUSIVE JEWELLER RE-leased a video Wednesday which it said showed Dodi Al-Fayed picking up an engagement ring for Diana, Princess of Wales, just hours before both died in their 1997 Paris car crash.

In a letter to AFP, which obtained a copy of the video, the jewellery company Repossi said it was making the images available after receiving authorization from Mohamed Al-Fayed, Dodi's wealthy father who has long insisted darker motives were behind the car accident.

Repossi said it had not previously released the surveillance video on the advice of its lawyers, but did not elaborate.

The move came a day before the publication of a British report which is expected to confirm French findings that the couple's death was accidental, refuting speculation supported by Mohamed Al-Fayed that Diana and his son might have been killed by British intelligence.

The washed-out, black-and-white video, which was timestamped Aug. 30, 1997, showed a man resembling Dodi Al-Fayed entering Repossi's upscale Place Vendome boutique in central Paris, which neighbors the Ritz Hotel owned by Mohamed Al-Fayed.

The man entered at 5:44 p.m., according to the timestamp, and stayed a total of seven minutes. During that time he can be seen examining items of jewellery pulled out of a case and placed on a table. At the end of his visit, he seems to pick something up off a table and then leaves.

In the early hours of the next morning, Aug. 31, Dodi Al-Fayed, 42, and Diana, 36, were killed, fleeing papparazzi through the middle of Paris.

Henri Paul, the driver of the Mercedes provided by the Ritz, where they had been staying, lost control of the car and it smashed into a support pillar of a tunnel at high speed.

Repossi on Tuesday issued a statement saying Dodi Al-Fayed had inspected engagement rings in its Monaco branch earlier August 1997 and had "wanted the ring to be ready by Aug. 30, 1997, at the latest." It said "Dodi Al-Fayed went to the Repossi boutique on the Place Vendome to collect the engagement ring, which came from the 'Say Yes' collection, to give it to Princess Diana." It said that, as well as the security video, it had proof of the purchase in the form of a receipt. Both pieces of evidence had been given to legal authorities who investigated the subsequent car crash, the jeweller's said.

The French probe concluded that the Ritz driver was to blame for the accident because he was drunk, high on prescription drugs and driving too fast.

Diana married Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, in July 1981 and was a hugely popular member of the royal family. The couple separated in December 1992 and divorced in August 1996.

Mohamed Al-Fayed claims Diana and his son were killed on the orders of the British establishment to prevent them marrying. *AFP*

SPORTS

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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TIME DEPOT
Give Time this Christmas
SUUNTO

JOAN Tipon runs with the Philippine flag after winning the boxing bantamweight crown over Korea's Han Soon-chul. LYN RILLON

Tipon unable to recognize GMA's voice

By Ted S. Melendres
Sports Editor

DOHA, QATAR—EITHER JOAN **Tipon's ears were still ringing from the grateful roar of his countrymen or his victory had just sunk in.**

Tipon never really heard the voice at the other end of the line.

Boxing's bantamweight gold medalist at the 15th Asian Games was being whisked away by venue volunteers in orange track suits when a man he didn't know handed him a mobile phone.

"... wants to congratulate you ... GMA ..." said the man, as another roar drowned the rest of what he was trying to say.

Tipon pressed the phone against his right ear but just couldn't hear a thing except the noise at the arena. Then he handed the phone back to the man, thanked him and disappeared into the dressing room.

Five hours later, over a dinner of Filipino delicacies at a shopping-mall restaurant, a proud Manny Lopez, the head of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, described how wildly cheering Filipino fans carried Tipon to victory.

He also said news of the country's second boxing gold reached

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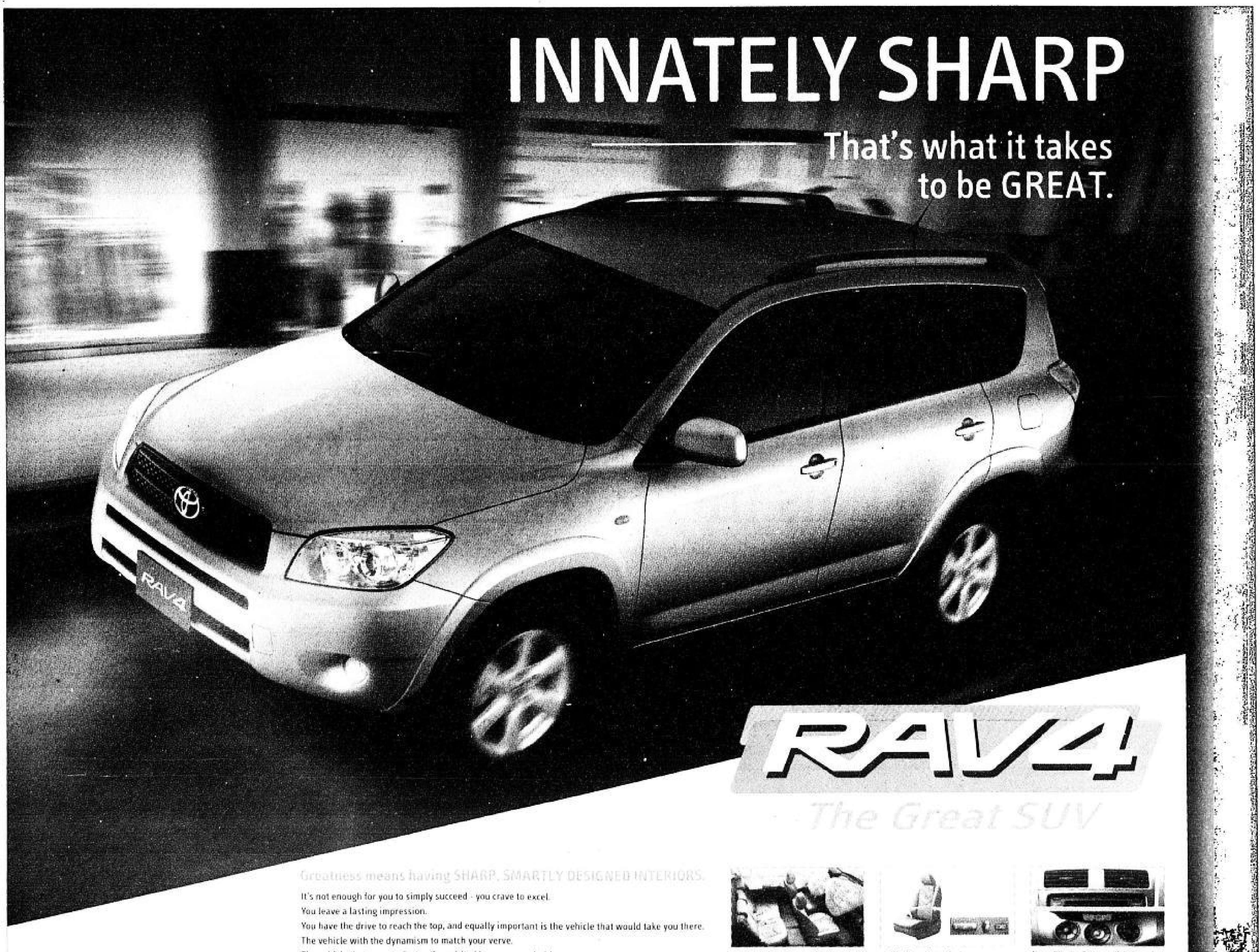
2006 ASIAN GAMES MEDAL TALLY AS OF DEC 14; 5:15 PM

Nation	G	S	B	Total	Nation	G	S	B	Total
China	147	79	61	287	Malaysia	6	15	16	37
South Korea	51	51	77	179	Hong Kong	6	10	10	26
Japan	49	68	73	190	North Korea	6	8	14	28
Kazakhstan	21	17	37	75	Kuwait	5	5	2	12
Thailand	12	15	25	52	**Philippines**	4	6	9	19
Iran	10	13	16	39	Vietnam	3	10	7	20
India	9	18	24	51	Mongolia	2	5	7	14
Taiwan	9	7	27	43	Indonesia	2	2	15	19
Uzbekistan	8	11	12	31	Syria	2	1	3	6
Qatar	8	10	10	28	Tajikistan	2	0	2	4
Singapore	8	7	12	27	United Arab Emirates	1	4	2	7
Saudi Arabia	8	0	5	13					
Bahrain	7	8	4	19					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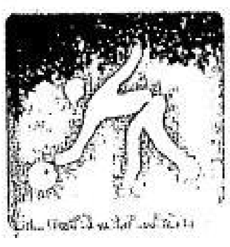
Bowlers brace for brickbats

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—RECRIMINATIONS ARE EXpected to fly when the bowlers and their coaches meet with officials of the Philippine Bowling Congress on Dec. 19 to assess their humiliating performance at the 15th Asian Games.



An official of the RP delegation here said some bowlers are already preparing complaints against certain officials of the team and the PBC. He declined to elaborate.

The bowlers, the only squad in the RP contingent with a full complement of players, failed to win a single medal—36 were staked in the sport—in six events in both the men's and women's competitions.

It was a stunning letdown for a star-studded team that included reigning world singles champion Biboy Rivera, "Bowler of the Century" Paeng Nepomuceno, former World Cup champion CJ Suarez, Manila Southeast Asian Games masters gold medalist Markwin Tee and former world women's trios champs Liza del Rosario, Cecilia Yap and Liza Clutario.

The other members of the team were Irene Garcia-Benitez, Jojo Canare, Marianne Daisy Posadas, Tyrone Ongpauco and Chester King.

"They will find fault somewhere," said the official who declined to be named.

Salonga to 'float' as Asiad closes

LEA SALONGA'S STAR WILL BE AS BRIGHT as the athletes when the 15th Asian Games closes today in an ambitious Arabian fairytale show, according to the highly distinguished production director of the Doha Asiad's opening ceremonies.

Briton David Atkins, also the creative mind behind the spectacular opening ceremonies, said the 50-minute fantasy extravaganza will feature Salonga floating on a cloud as she sings "Triumph of the One," a stirring ballad written as a tribute to the athletes of the Doha Games.

Atkins kept the closing show under wraps until Wednesday.

Salonga, who shot to fame in the world premiere of the London production of "Miss Saigon," will be joined by four other Asian singers on the main stage but the spotlight would be mainly on her, said Atkins.

Tickets to the magnificent Khalifa Stadium, where the closing ceremonies will be held, have been selling briskly here.

Lulu N. Wong of Bagumbayan Park, Tanauan, Batangas, and Cristy Ledesma Nicolas—wives of OFWs here and part of the 1,000-strong army of Asiad volunteers—said many Filipinos will not pass up the chance to see one of their own perform in Qatar's biggest international event in memory.

They said they also wanted to bid the Filipino athletes goodbye.

Thailand raps boxing officials

DOHA—THAILAND'S BOXING CHIEF HAS blamed biased and poor judging for his team's flop at the Asian Games, where it won a solitary gold medal. Taweep Jantararoj, the president of Thailand's Amateur Boxing Association, said a combination of incompetent and biased judging had cost several of his highly rated fighters gold medals. With former world and Olympic champions on the team, the kingdom had been expecting to pick up four golds in Doha, but instead ended up fourth in the medals table with only one victory.

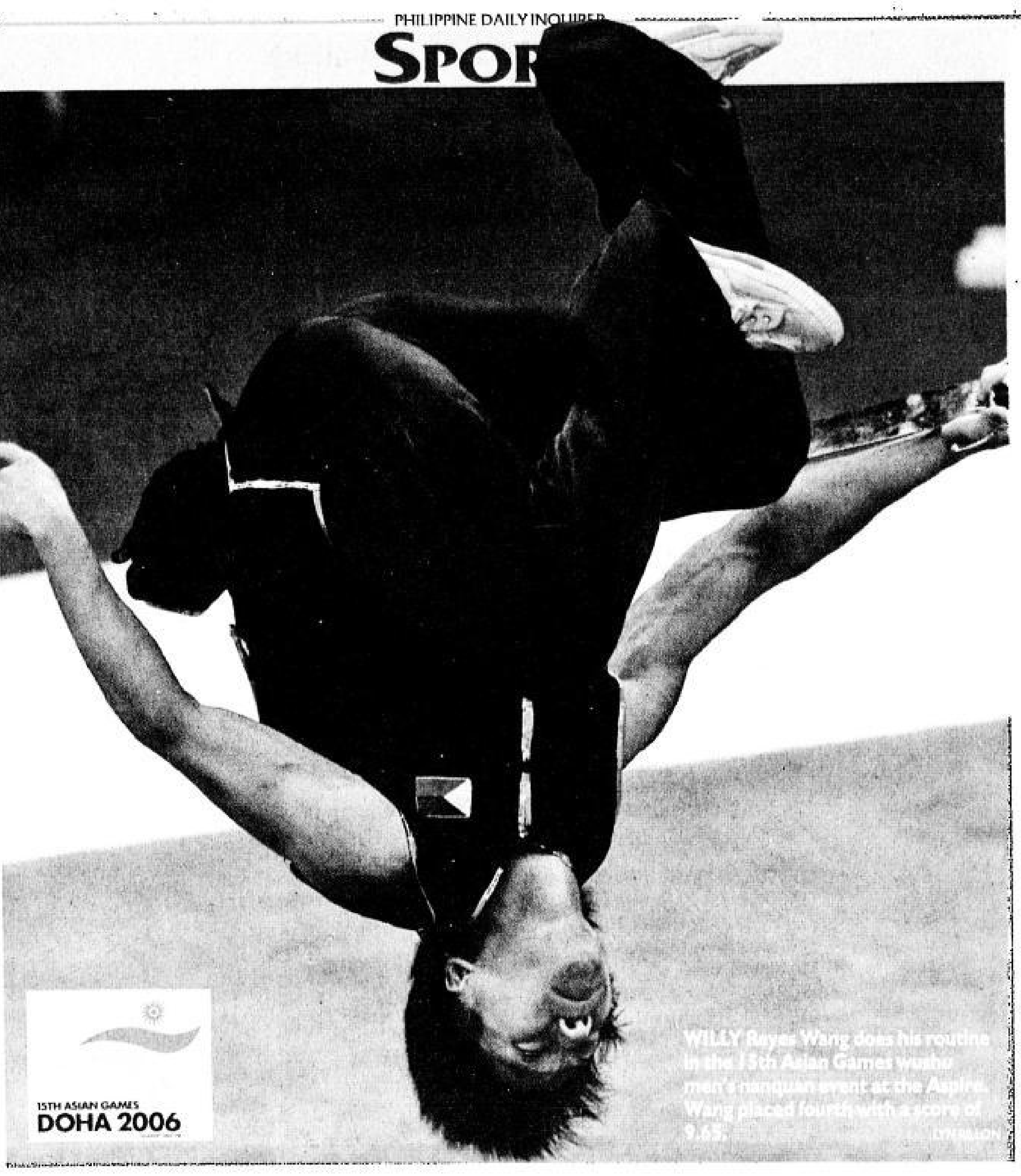
Reuters

RP Doha Asian Games medalists

Gold—Antonio Gabica, cue sports, men's 9-ball pool singles; Violito Payla, boxing, flyweight 51 kg; Joan Tipon, boxing, bantamweight 54 kg;

Silver—Mary Antoinette Rivero, taekwondo, women's 67 kg; Tshomlee Go, taekwondo, men's 62 kg; Antonio Gabica, cue sports, men's 9-ball pool singles; Jeffrey de Luna, cue sports, men's 9-ball pool singles; Ma. Marna Pabillore, karate, women's kumite 53 kg;

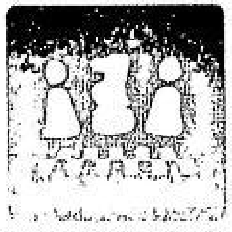
Bronze—Kathleeen Eunice Alora, taekwondo, women's 47 kg; Veronica Domingo, taekwondo, women's 63 kg; Manuel Rivero Jr., taekwondo, men's 67 kg; Godfrey Castro, boxing, light flyweight 48 kg; Genebert Basadre, boxing, lightweight 60 kg; Michael Eric Bibat, golf, men's individual; Cecil Mamilt, tennis, men's singles; Cecil Mamilt/Frederick Taino, tennis, men's doubles; Noel Espinosa, karate, men's kata individual.



WILLY Reyes Wang does his routine in the 15th Asian Games wushu men's nanquan event at the Aspire. Wang placed fourth with a score of 9.65. LYN RILLON

Chessers rise to 9th place

THE PHILIPPINES BLANKED PALESTINE, 3-0, to climb to solo ninth spot with one round left in the Classical/Standard Team competition of the 15th Asian Games at the Al-Dana Club, Doha, Qatar, late Wednesday.



International Masters Darwin Laylo and Ronald Dableo and 14-year-old Jedara Docena trounced Atta Taamra, Tala Shoubaita and Shadia Jaradat, on board 1 to 3, respectively. But the surge may have come too late for the Philippines which played without its top bets and will likely finish without a medal.

Team Philippines now has 13.0 points, behind Uzbekistan, Iran, Bangladesh and Southeast Asian rival Indonesia, which have 13.5 points each.

Uzbekistan draw with Iran (1.5-1.5); Bangladesh also blasted Syria (3-0); while Indonesia yielded to top seed and sure gold medal winner India (0.5-2.5).

The only thing that prevented an Indian shutout of the Indons was Grandmaster Susanto Megaranto's draw with Indian GM Pentala Harikrishna in their board 2 encounter. Indian GMs Krishnan Sasikiran and Humpy Koneru ripped Utut Adianto and WFM Irine Kharisma Sukandar on board 1 and 3, respectively.

India, with one round to go, is assured of the gold medal with its 21-point total.

Second-ranked China, with the draw with Kazakshtan, wrested solo second with 15.5 points while host country Qatar beat Turkmenistan (3-0) for third with 15.0 points.

The Philippines is set to face Turkmenistan in the final round.

NM Marlon Bernardino

Champs arriving together

ALL THREE ASIAN GAMES GOLD medalists will be arriving home in one flight tentatively this Sunday with President Macapagal-Arroyo personally congratulating them in Malacañang on Dec. 22.

This was announced by the Manila-based Asiad secretariat yesterday as they made arrangement with airlines to put triumphant cue master Antonio Gabica and boxers Violito Payla and Joan Tipon in just one flight along with other medal winners.

Philippine Sports Commission official Joseph Encabo added that the welcome rites for the athletes at the Palace were reset for Dec. 22 from Dec. 19.

The taekwondo team, which contributed to the RP cause with two silvers and three bronzes, arrived early this week even before the Philippines could win its first gold in the Qatar Games.

The country has already duplicated its three-gold haul four years ago in Busan, Korea, and is hoping for more golds in wushu going into the last day of competition.

Aside from the three golds, the Filipinos have five silver and nine bronze medals and are ranked 17th overall in the 45-nation field.

Encabo could not say whether there would be a ticker tape parade for the newest sporting heroes just like the one accorded boxing legend Manny Pacquiao when he came home after winning his grand finale against Mexican Erik Morales last month.

In 1994, the Philippines feted with a ticker tape parade around the metropolis the three Asian Games boxing heroes Elias Recaido, Onyok Velasco and Reynaldo Galido.

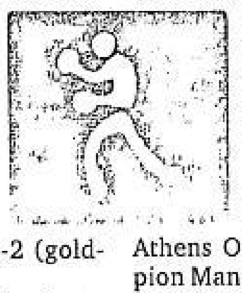
Velasco went on to win a silver medal, which was the country's second, in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

Gabica, who won the 9-ball singles after settling for the silver medal in the 8-ball singles, is assured of a P2.3 million bonus under the sports incentive scheme. Payla and Tipon will each receive P1.5 million. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

RP pugs outshine Thais this time

By Ted S. Melendres

THE PHILIPPINES BEAT HEAVY FAvorite and Southeast Asian Games rival Thailand to third place in the team standings at the close of the boxing competition at the 15th Asian Games.



The victories of flyweight Violito Payla and bantamweight Joan Tipon and the bronze won by featherweight Genebert Basadre and Godfrey Castro pushed the Filipinos to No. 3 in the medal tally with a 2-0-2 (gold-silver-bronze) harvest.

Uzbekistan, striking in the heavier weight classes, topped the competition with three gold, one silver and 2 bronze medals.

Surprising China posted two impressive victories—through light flyweight Zou Shiming and lightweight Hu Qing—and pipped the seven-man RP squad to second place by just a bronze, 3-2.

The accurate-punching, quick-moving Zou totally outclassed Thai favorite Suban Pannon as he took the gold via RSC-Os (referee stop contest-outscored) one minute and 36 seconds into the second round. Suban had scored only once when the fight was stopped, 21-1.

The Thais settled for fourth place with 1-3-1, their only gold won by Athens Olympic lightweight champion Manus Boonjumnong.

The Filipinos held the Thais to a 2-2 standoff in their head-to-head duel.

"*Malaking bagay ang tinalo natin sa medalya ang* (It's a big deal that, medal-wise, we beat) Thailand," chorused national coaches Patricio Gaspi, Nolito Velasco and Ronald Chavez.

THE Philippine boxing team led by gold medalists Violito Payla and Joan Tipon after their triumphant Doha Asian Games campaign. The boxers grabbed two golds and two bronzes. (Standing from left) bronze medalist Genebert Basadre (lightweight), Payla (flyweight), Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines president Manny T. Lopez, Tipon (bantamweight) and bronze medalist Godfrey Castro (light-flyweight). (Kneeling from left) welterweight Frances Joven, featherweight Anthony Marcial and Delfin Boholst.

Tipon unable to recognize . . .

From page A31

President Macapagal-Arroyo fast.

Just as Tipon was being led away from the ring, Philippine Ambassador Isaias Begonia managed to hand the phone over to the boxer. It was the President at the other end of the line.

"So, what did she tell you?" a curious Lopez asked Tipon, who suddenly turned pale.

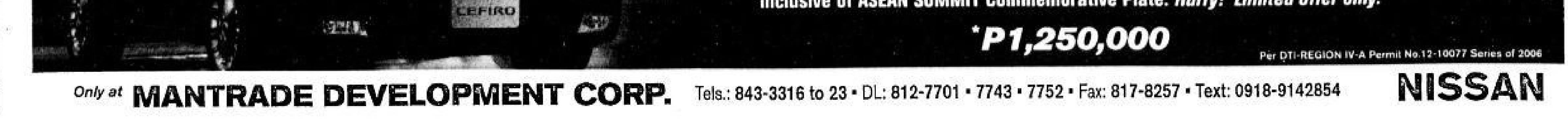
"*Si Presidente* (The President)?" he said. "*Sir, hindi ko na narinig, maingay kasi* (Sir, I couldn't hear anything because of the noise)."

"*Si Presidente 'yun, di ba, at 'yung nag-abot ng telepono ay si* ambassador (It was the President, all right, and the man who handed you the phone was the ambassador)?" Lopez insisted.

"*Pasensiya na sir, ang akala ko* reporter *ng GMA-7 ang gustong kumausap sa akin* (I beg your pardon, sir, I thought a reporter from GMA-7 wanted to talk to me."

Before the group broke up for the night, Tipon sheepishly approached sports writers and said he wanted to thank Ms Arroyo for her support.

"*Nagpapasalamat ako sa Pangulo dahil nakiisa siya sa panalo ko* (I thank the President for being one with me in victory)," he said. "*Nakakahiya lang at hindi ko siya nabosesan* (It's a shame that I did not recognize her voice).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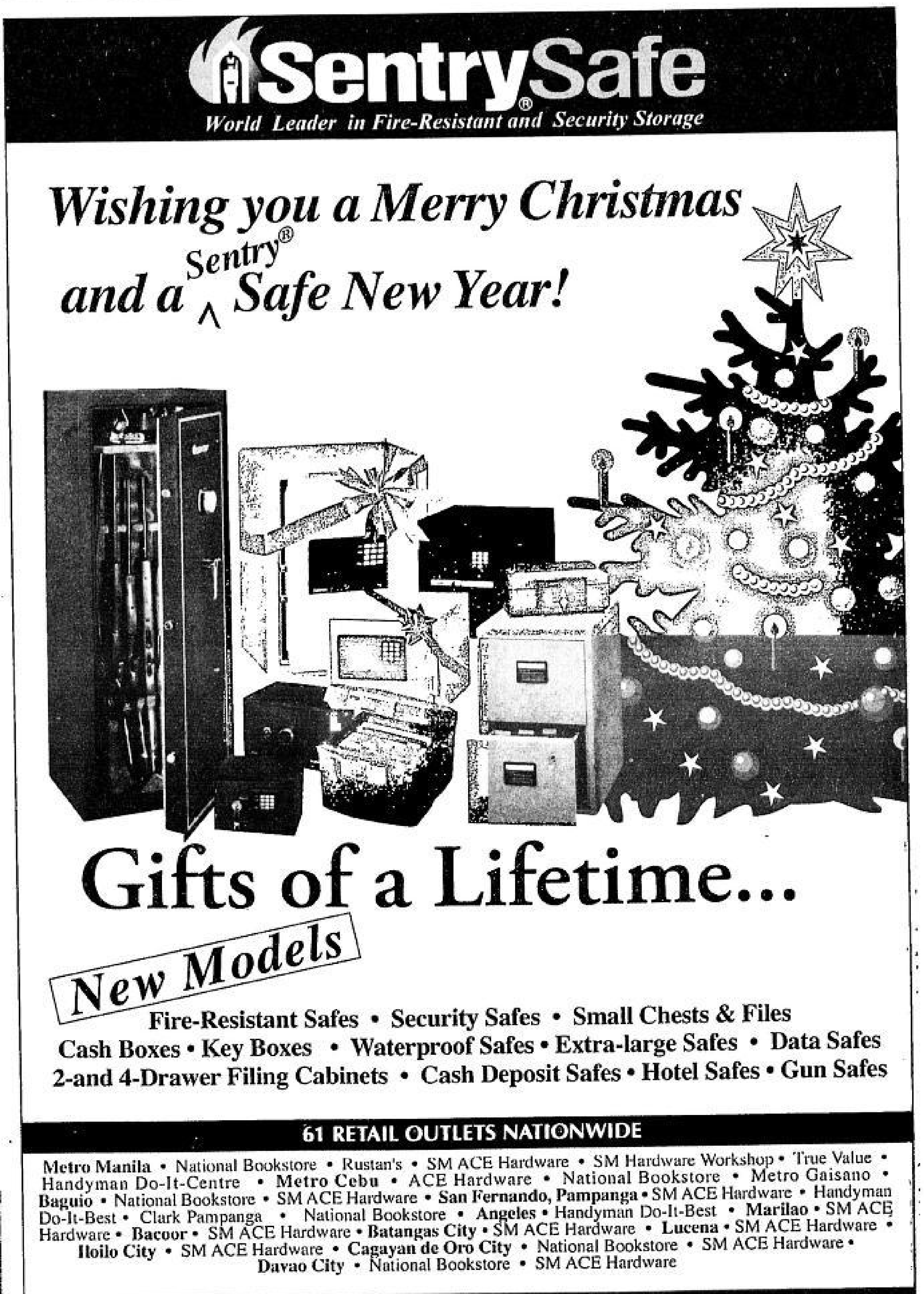
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Reliever powers Comets past Moneymen in 2 OTs

By Jasmine W. Payo

A LATE OFFENSIVE BOOST FROM THIRD-STRING GUARD RONJAY BUEnafe yesterday lifted Mail and More to a 95-90 double overtime victory over Cebuana Lhuillier-Pera Padala for a share of the lead in the PBL Silver Cup at the UST Gym.

GAMES TOMORROW
(Olivarez College Sports Center)
2 p.m.—Cebuana Lhuillier vs Toyota Otis
4 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Magnolia

Buenafe came off the bench in the second extension and drilled in five straight points which proved key to the Comets' fifth win in seven games, not bad for a four-minute stint which would definitely earn him more time in future games.

"I wasn't using him because he was playing behind (Jorel) Cañizares and (Mike) Bravo, who were both playing well," said coach Lawrence Chongson of Buenafe.

It was Mail and More's fourth straight win as it joined Henkel Sista and Hapee-PCU on top.

In the second game, the TeleTech Titans routed the Kettle Korn-UST Tigers, 74-52, to move up to fourth place with a 4-2 card.

The Titans broke away in the second half with Kim Valenzuela drilling in 13 of his 18 points in the third period, keeping the Tigers, the reigning UAAP champions, winless in seven games.

Elmer Espiritu was also a hero, keying the first overtime after blocking a Macky Escalona shot in the dying seconds to preserve a 73-all tie. He later scored on a follow-up at the buzzer to forge the second extra period at 82.

JR Quiñahan posted his second straight double-double with a game-high 21 points, 14 rebounds, and his three blocks were also game-highs for Mail and More.

Bravo chipped in 15 markers, including two free throws in the last 50.8 seconds of regulation that knotted the contest at 73.

Buenafe scored on a layup and then a triple to usher the Comets to an 89-83 lead which proved safe with only 2:03 left.

Before Espiritu responded with that buzzer-beating basket, Escalona's split from the free throw line had given the Moneymen an 82-80 lead heading into the final 18.7 seconds of the first extension.

The Comets seemed headed for a blowout win after leading by as many as 22 points, 55-33, midway in the third quarter.

Mark Abadia, who shot a team-high 19 points, spearheaded the Moneymen's comeback to tie the game at 67-67, with two minutes left in regulation.

The Moneymen skidded to their third straight loss to join the Magnolia Spinners at seventh place with 2-4 slates, while the Tigers remained winless in seven games.

The scores:

First Game

MAIL AND MORE 95—Quiñahan 21, Bravo 15, Cañizares 11, Espiritu 10, Del Rosario 8, Viray 8, Coyukang 7, Te 5, Buenafe 5, David 3, Yambao 2, Pribhdas 0, Ballesteros 0.

CEBUANA LHUILLIER 90—Abadia 19, Bono 16, Dela Cuesta 12, Kramer 11, Escalona 8, Yee 7, Dulay 7, Buyco 5, Oreta 3, Mendoza 2, Viardo 0, Tagupa 0.

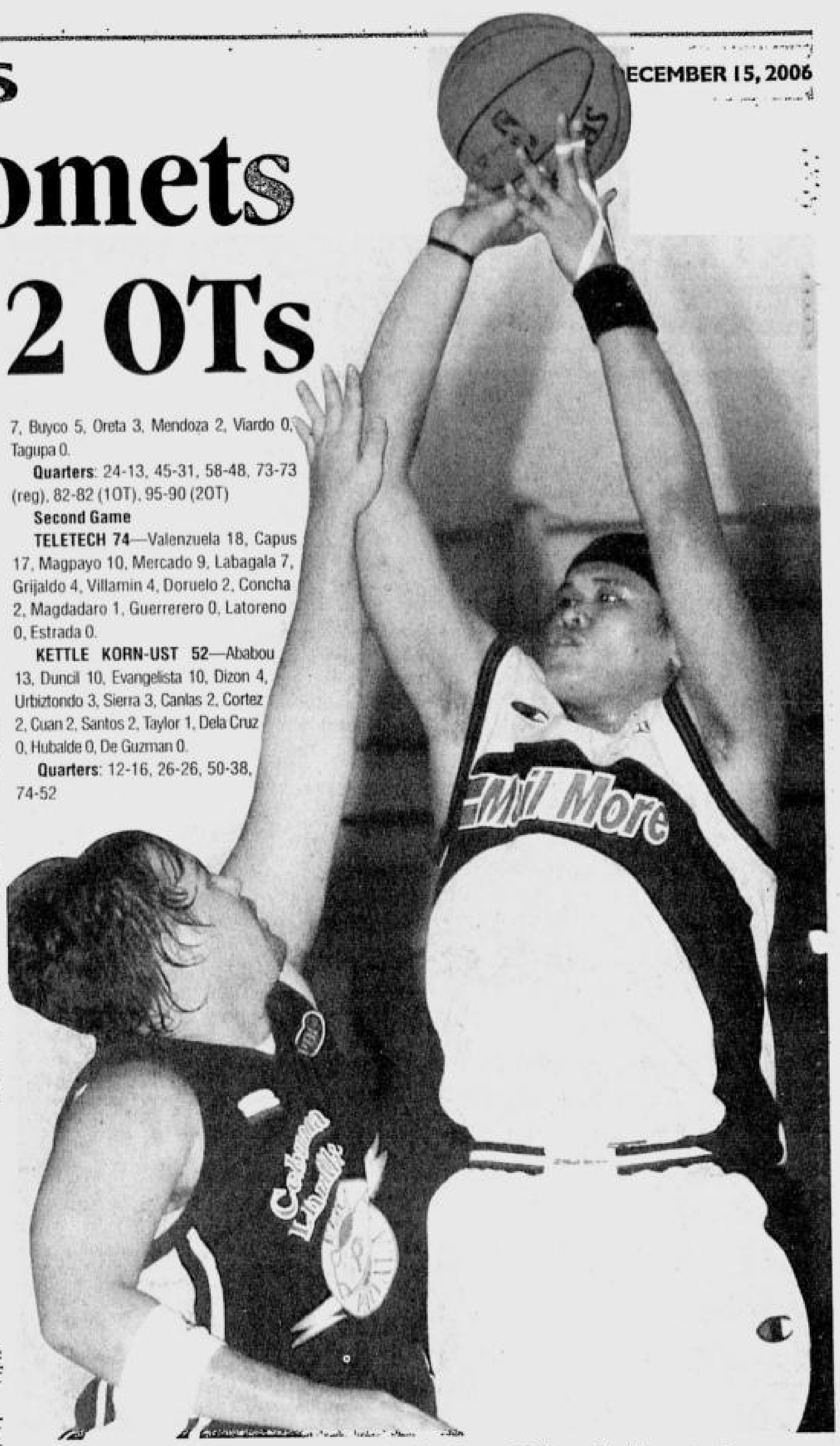
Quarters: 24-13, 45-31, 58-48, 73-73 (reg), 82-82 (1OT), 95-90 (2OT)

Second Game

TELETECH 74—Valenzuela 18, Capus 17, Magpayo 10, Mercado 9, Labagala 7, Grijaldo 4, Villamin 4, Doruelo 2, Concha 2, Magdadaro 1, Guerrerero 0, Latoreno 0, Estrada 0.

KETTLE KORN-UST 52—Ababou 13, Duncil 10, Evangelista 10, Dizon 4, Urbiztondo 3, Sierra 3, Canlas 2, Cortez 2, Cuan 2, Santos 2, Taylor 1, Dela Cruz 0, Hubalde 0, De Guzman 0.

Quarters: 12-16, 26-26, 50-38, 74-52



MAIL and More's JR Quinahan shoots over rival Ken Bono of Cebuana Lhuillier yesterday. ERIK ARAZAS

Pagadian ousts Tribu Sugbu, forges semis duel vs Ozamiz

ASAYTONO

ILIGAN CITY—MAYOR Sammy Co's Pagadian Explorers ousted Arthro/Sky-go-backed Tribu Sugbu, 95-86, Wednesday in the 2006 Spring Cooking Oil-NBC National Cup basketball tournament at the St. Michael's gym here.

Former PBA MVP Nelson Asaytono fired a game-high 30 points to propel the Explorers to a semifinal date with back-to-back champion Ozamiz Cotta.

Asaytono shot 50 percent from the field and converted all his eight charities to spoil the Tribesmen's bid to extend the series after losing 92-103 in the first game.

Fil-Am guard Rob Johnson supported Asaytono with 22 points, 12 assists, seven rebounds and five steals.

The Tribesmen of businessmen Jonathan Guardo and Lito Gillamac finished the classification at 6-3, the same card posted by the other semifinalist—Spring-Tagaytay.

The semifinal series kicks off today at the Corpus Christi College gym in Cagayan de Oro City with the Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and league EVP Mayor Bambol Tolentino facing Gov. Manny Piñol's North Cotabato Braves in the opener. Last year's finalists—Pagadian and Ozamiz—square off in the featured match.

The Explorers controlled the game from the start although only seven of them scored.

With Asaytono, Johnson and Peter Naron waxing hot, the Explorers increased their 25-23 first-quarter edge to 48-40 at the turn and never looked back.

Doroteo Almacin tried to rally his team to no avail. Almacin finished with a league career-high 27 points.

The scores:

PAGADIAN 95—Asaytono 30, Johnson 22, Naron 17, Mamaclay 12, Orquillas 9, Marata 3, Omandam 2, Ayuk 0, Sinco 0, Unabia 0, Malcontento 0, Pamaran 0.

TRIBU 86—Almacin 27, Ababon 11, De Guzman 8, Mercado 8, Co 7, Berami 7, Sevilla 6, Gadiane 4, Calo 43, Abelong 2, Santos 2, Arda 0.

Quarters: 25-23, 48-40, 69-64, 95-86.

India aims to close in on China

DOHA, QATAR—ONCE AGAIN, INDIA'S MEDAL take at the Asian Games has been dwarfed by China. Suresh Kalmadi's job is to ensure that situation changes.

As president of the Indian Olympic Association, Kalmadi helps oversee a multimillion dollar (euro) program aimed at overhauling India's sports development and giving China, one of the world's leading sporting nations and the only one with a bigger popular, a run for its money.

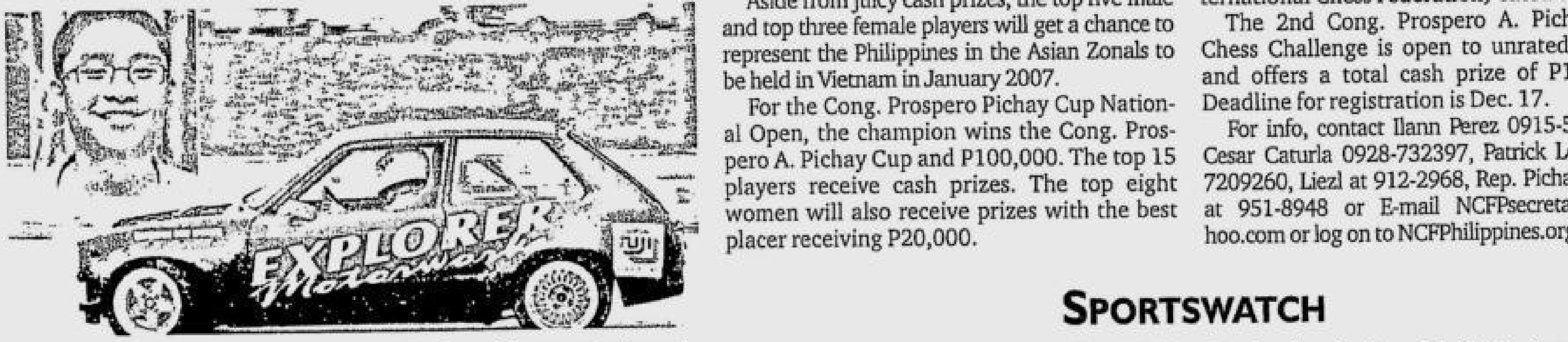
"It's not just about participation anymore," Kalmadi said in Doha, Qatar, on the fringes of the Asian Games, the continent's premier sporting event. "It's about contending for medals."

Kalmadi has his work cut out for him. While often mentioned alongside China as a rising Asian giant, India is nowhere close in sporting terms.

By Thursday, the second to last day of competition, China had 147 Asian Games golds to just nine for India. More telling, Indian athletes competed in only about half of the 39 events at Doha, compared with 37 by China.

In a particularly bitter defeat, eight-time Olympic champion India failed to win a medal in Asian Games men's hockey—after its first ever loss to China. *AP*

15TH ASIAN GAMES DOHA 2006



SLALOM CHAMP: Douglas Maningding of Explorer Motorsports bagged four titles and the overall Novice best time recently in the 12th and final leg of Race Motorsports Club National Slalom Grand Prix 2006 at Robinson's Fairview. Maningding, a 12-year-old student of La Salle-Greenhills, ruled the Open B class, the Novice Modified B, Novice Modified C and Novice Prototype. His brother Uly clinched the overall and production series best time in the Pro A class.

Policarpio bags TRS Ford Focus Cup title

JOWARD POLICARPIO RULED two of the last four races to emerge overall champion of the 2006 TRS-Ford Focus Cup recently at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

The youngest in the field at 17, Policarpio displayed intensity and determination in turning back older and more experienced rivals in Race 9 and 10.

That was enough to secure the title as he wrapped up the overall plum with a total of 104 points. Toti Turalba ended overall runner-up with 78 points while former karting champ Matthew Edmunds took third place with 58.

"This is a dream come true," said Joward. "I always wanted to be a race champ like my dad (Boyet) who has always been so supportive. And I'm very thankful to Ford Focus and the Tuason Racing School for giving me this opportunity to shine."

"Joward deserves it because he really gave his best. And we're proud to say that with his title-clinching feat, Joward rose to the challenge to earn the tag as the next important star in Philippine motorsports," said JP Tuason, a former karting champ and president of the organizing Tuason Racing School.

2nd Pichay Cup dangles Asian Zonals slots, cash

SLOTS FOR THE ASIAN ZONALS AND P450,000 will be up for grabs in the 2nd Cong. Prospero A. Pichay Cup National Open Chess Championship and Chess Challenge slated Dec. 18-23 at the 5th Floor of SM Manila.

Aside from juicy cash prizes, the top five male and top three female players will get a chance to represent the Philippines in the Asian Zonals to be held in Vietnam in January 2007.

For the Cong. Prospero Pichay Cup National Open, the champion wins the Cong. Prospero A. Pichay Cup and P100,000. The top 15 players receive cash prizes. The top eight women will also receive prizes with the best placer receiving P20,000.

National Chess Federation of the Philippines president and Surigao del Sur Representative Pichay said the tournament will give local woodpushers the chance to acquire title results since the National Open is a Fide (International Chess Federation)-rated event.

The 2nd Cong. Prospero A. Pichay Cup Chess Challenge is open to unrated players and offers a total cash prize of P110,000. Deadline for registration is Dec. 17.

For info, contact Ilann Perez 0915-5198676, Cesar Caturla 0928-732397, Patrick Lee 0927-7209260, Liezl at 912-2968, Rep. Pichay's office at 951-8948 or E-mail NCFPsecretariat@yahoo.com or log on to NCFPhilippines.org.

SPORTSWATCH

Batara, Guangko 3rd in JNII

FILIPINOS, WILFRED BATARA AND MANFRED Guangko landed third place in the inaugural Jack Nicklaus International Invitational (JNII) golf tournament recently at The Bear's Club in Jupiter, Florida, USA. Dubbed the Tournament of Champions, the event was the culmination of a series of amateur golf championships held in various countries earlier this year. The finals, which is a gross no handicap event was played from the championship tees with mirror-like greens. Batara and Guangko, who were selected after competing at the qualifying tournament held in Sta. Elena Golf Club in Canlubang, Laguna, in July, contended with other amateur teams from the United States, Canada, Mexico, Japan, Korea, China and Indonesia. Korea and USA's tandems bagged second and first prize, respectively.

Runnex Executive Classic

THE RUNNEX 5K/10K EXECUTIVE CLASSIC, ORIGInally slated Dec. 3, will push through Dec. 17 inside the UP Diliman campus. "We are expecting a good number of runners from the business sector, more so now that the Runners' Confederation of the Philippines has assured us of its support," said Runnex president Dr. Alberto Verzola. Entry forms are available at the Runnex secretariat, F.M. Ringor Engineering, 196 William Shaw St., Caloocan City. Registration fee is P500. For information, call Mary Anne or Anna at 366-9367, 364-6201; Abacus Aircon Systems, 108 West Ave., QC, 926-2045, 926-2043, or look for Marivic Marty at Runnex Shed at the Quezon Memorial Circle from 7-9 a.m.

Delada defends title tonight

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—RANGY PHILIPPINE lightweight king Dexter "Dinamita" Delada will defend his title against Arnel Porras tonight in a 12-round clash at the Gusa Sports Complex here. This will be Delada's first defense of the title he won by stopping Christopher Saluday on July 25 in Dapitan City. Delada, 16-4 with 11 KOs, is slightly favored over the Kidapawan City-raised Porras, who is coming off several wins in Australia. "This is an important fight for him. A win sets him up for big fights abroad," said fight promoter and Delada's manager Rex 'Wakee' Salud, who will witness the fight before motoring to General Santos City to grace Manny Pacquiao's birthday celebration. On the undercard, Bogie Delada trades mitts with Bohol sensation Isidro Balabat in a 10-round encounter, while local boy Abdul Simo of Donald Ampalayohan Stable takes on Mambajao-based banger Dave Cris. *Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

100 fights at Pasay Cockpit

THE ANNUAL PASKO SA PASAY 4-COCK DERBY starts at 2 p.m. today at Pasay City Cockpit with more than 100 fights scheduled. Pit manager Butchoy Olano, who will host the event, said total guaranteed prize is P600,000. Each participant gets a PCC jacket. Participants include William Go, Lito Orillaza, Boy Corcuera, Roger Segismundo, 2006 Bakbakan champions Bobby Doromal and Jenjen Arayata, Cavite International Derby champion Ito Ynares, William Co, Rudy Salud, Rolly Ligon, Rey Briones, Sam Mendoza, Bobbit Ples, Butch Nuñez, Lito Roquez and Cito Manansala. Call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816- 6750.

RACING TIPS

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Can And Will (4), Mischievous (3), Last Dance (6), Valiant Queen (2)
Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Queen's Kitty (11), Reality Show (9), Gold And Diamond (5), Mr. Love (10), Windtalker (6)
Race 3—(Qrt/Tri)—Hakuna Matata (10), Penny Wise (2), Windless (6), Please Do (5)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—True Account (9), Ocean Deep (1), Queen Banana (3), Kokpelli (6), Allysa's Choice (2)
Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Angel Of Light (4), Mindpower Miss (2), Tango With Me (6), Lord Of All (3)
Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Golden Issue (1), Ikaw Pag-asa Ko (3), West Swinger (9), Danielle's Angel (6), River Bandit (2)
Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—Jun Siete (1), Lynjonik (2), Don Peri Gold (4), Venus D'Goddess (6)
Race 8—(Qrt/Tri)—Golden Touch (6), Red Hot Water (4), Strong Jays (5), Class Action (3)
Race 9—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Batang Bukid (4), Playing Cool (7), I Remain (2), Yankee Clipper (10), Detective Daryll (8), Awesome Power (6)

Marcelo dons RP colors in Asian Karting finals

RISING FILIPINO STAR JEAN STEFANO Marcelo goes up against world caliber karters in the finals of the Asian Karting Championship this weekend at the Macau track.

The 16-year-old Stefano, who wound up fourth overall in the 2006 Shell Superkarting Series, is the third generation of the Marcelo Racing family. He's the grandson of racing legend Eddie Marcelo and son of former jet ski champ and Formula Three driver John Marcelo.

Stefano, who competed in the Italian Open Masters Championship, will be donning the RP colors in the Rotax Max Seniors division. He's hoping to use the event as springboard to relive the glory of his uncle Jovy Marcelo, the 1991 Toyota Atlantic champion who died in crash during practice in the 1992 season of the Indianapolis 500-mile race or Indy 500.

"This will be for the country's glory," said Stefano. "The experience at the Italian open Masters Karting championship will be a big help and barring any mechanical problem, I promise to give it my best shot."

He'll be racing for the M&M Racing Team of Michele Bumgarner under the tutelage of a former world karting champion Terry Fullerton.

"A big feat here could open up more doors to our goal of going international next year," said Stefano. "We hope to show top world racing officials who will be witnessing the event that Filipinos have the talent to become world-caliber karters."

JEAN STEFANO MARCELO

China inches closer to Busan gold haul

DOHA, QATAR—WHILE THE ASIAN Games were winding down Wednesday, China seemed to be gearing back up.

With just one full day of competition left, the Chinese won 10 more gold medals Wednesday to move just three away from the 150 they won in Busan, South Korea, in 2002.

More strikingly—at least in how the country has dominated the other 44 nations here—the 2008 Beijing Olympic hosts were nearly 100 ahead of their nearest rivals. South Korea has 51 gold and Japan 49, those two countries left to battle it out for a distant second place.

With 41 more gold medals to be decided Thursday, there's a good chance China could widen the gap even more. Only two golds will be awarded Friday, when China's basketball team led by NBA prospect Yi Jianlian plays Qatar in the final.

China beat Jordan, 86-58, and Qatar edged Iran, 67-64, in basketball semifinals Wednesday. That gave the home country two big chances for gold on the final day—Qatar plays Iraq in the men's soccer gold medal match just a few hours before the closing ceremonies.

15TH ASIAN GAMES DOHA 2006

Earlier, tennis player Zheng Jie added to China's burgeoning total. In the women's final, Zheng beat fourth-seeded Sania Mirza of India, 6-4, 1-6, 6-1.

In the deciding set, Zheng went up two service breaks to lead 4-1, then won her next service game at love.

In the final game, Mirza double-faulted twice—on the last two points of the match.

"I served quite well in the beginning, but then began making silly errors," said Mirza. "Zheng capitalized on her chances and I did not." *AP*

Qataris face Chinese for cage crown

DOHA, QATAR—FORMER DALLAS MAVERick Wang Zhizhi scored 20 points as China advanced to the Asian Games basketball final with a 86-58 win over Jordan Wednesday night.

China will next face host Qatar, which held off Iran, 67-64, in Friday's gold medal match.

Urged on by a raucous cheering section, Jordan ran to a 24-21 lead in the first quarter. China coach Jonas Kazlauskas switched from man-to-man to zone defense and China began to tighten up, taking a 41-32 lead at the half.

With 3 minutes, 46 seconds left in the third quarter, China's lead had expanded to 13 points and the game seemed secure. Jordan struggled on, but China added another 20 before the final buzzer for the 28-point win.

With China's Houston Rockets star Yao Ming remaining in the US, Wang has been shouldering center duties and he menaced Jordan inside the paint all night, ending eight for 16 in shooting with four points from the line.

Yi Jianlian, a 19-year-old NBA prospect, added 17 points, while Zhu Fangyu scored 12. Jordanian captain Zaid Al Khas scored 27 points while seeking to hold together his increasingly frustrated and ragged looking teammates.

Mo Ke was flawless from field goal range, shooting five-for-five, including three three-pointers, to rack up 13 points. *AP*

Suns hotter than Heat

MIAMI—THE PHOENIX SUNS WON their 12th straight game—their longest winning streak in 14 years—by downing the Miami Heat, 99-89, in the NBA on Wednesday.

It is the first time they have won 12 straight games since their 14-match winning streak in 1992, as they improved to 15-6 while handing Miami its third loss in its past five games.

Dwyane Wade joined Shaquille O'Neal on the sidelines for the Heat after having two wisdom teeth removed on Tuesday. His status is day to day.

Phoenix shot 48 percent from the field while the Heat managed to shoot just 40 percent, with Miami hitting just four of its 19 shots from three-point range.

Taking advantage of Wade's absence, the Suns raced to a 56-40 half-time lead before extending it to 21 points after three quarters.

The Heat staged a furious fourth quarter rally attempt after the lead grew to 25 points at one point, but the Suns hung on to complete a perfect 5-0 road trip and give them their second longest winning streak in franchise history.

Shawn Marion paced the Suns with 23 points and 13 rebounds, while Steve Nash had 18 points and 11 assists. Boris Diaw chipped in with 13 points and 11 rebounds for the winners.

Alonzo Mourning led the shorthanded Heat with 19 points, while Udonis Haslem added 14 points and seven rebounds.

Gilbert Arenas had 34 points to lift the Washington Wizards to their fourth win in five games, a 120-91 rout of the Denver Nuggets. Carmelo Anthony led Denver with 37 points.

COMPLETE RESULTS: Denver 100, Atlanta 87; Milwaukee 94, Seattle 93; LA Lakers 102, Houston 94; Golden State 126, Sacramento 113. *AP*

NBA ON TV Today

10:30 a.m.—San Antonio vs NO/OKC (replays @ 4 p.m. & 9:30 p.m.)

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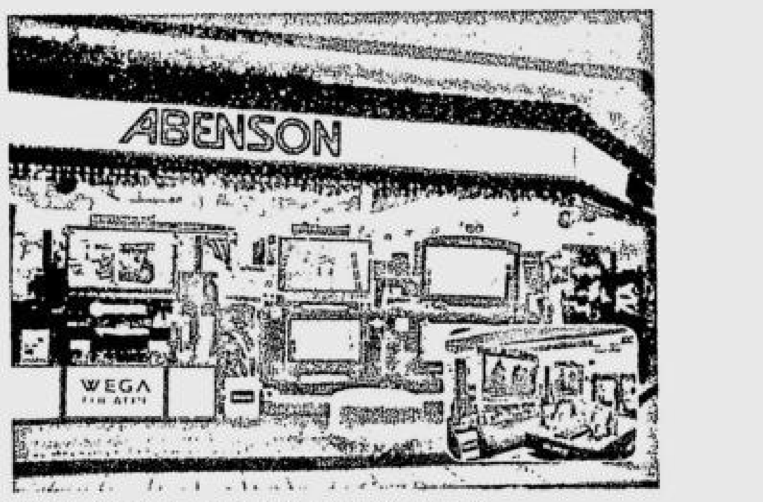

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4098 Series of 2006

Realtors eye revenge vs Kings

STANDINGS	W	L
Ginebra	11	4
SMB	11	5
Sta. Lucia	10	6
Red Bull	10	6
Purefoods	10	6
Talk N Text	9	7
Air21	7	9
Alaska	5	10
Coca-Cola	4	13
Welcoat	3	14

STA. LUCIA REALTY DOESN'T WANT TO BE IN A POSITION where the chances of snaring an outright semifinal seat are bleak.

The Realtors aim to topple powerhouse Barangay Ginebra Kings tonight in the Talk 'N Text-PBA Philippine Cup at the Ynares Center to remain in contention for the top two spots by the end of the classification round.

"We need this win badly," said Sta. Lucia Realty coach Alfrancis Chua of the 7:20 p.m. contest with the Kings, knowing that a defeat could put the fate of the Realtors in the next round beyond their control.

"There's still a possibility to advance outright (into the semis). If we could win our last two games, I think we might have a chance," he added.

After snapping a three-game skid at the expense of the Welcoat Dragons, the Realtors are looking to get back at the Kings and end their elimination campaign with flourish over the Coca-Cola Tigers.

But Chua knows it wouldn't be easy. On a five-game winning run, the Kings are gunning for a win and an outright berth in the best-of-seven semifinals.

The Kings, who have three games left in the preliminaries, lead the race with an 11-4 record while the San Miguel Beermen are close behind after nailing their 11th win in 16 games the other night.

The Realtors are tied with Red Bull and Purefoods for third with 10 victories and six losses.

"Every game is important so it's going to be tough," said Ginebra coach Jong Uichico after beating coach Tim Cone and the Aces in Lucena City almost a week ago.

"Even though we're coming off a six-day layoff, I know my team is still hungry for a win," he added. "I expect the same level of intensity when we played Alaska."

The Aces take on the Air21 Express in the curtain-raiser seeking to at least improve their seeding in the wildcard phase.

At 5-10, the Aces are out of the running for an automatic quarterfinal seat along with the Express (7-9).

The top two teams in the classification round go straight to the semifinals while teams which wound up third to fifth will earn automatic quarterfinal tickets.

Teams ranked sixth to ninth will play in the single-round wildcard phase where the top seed secures the last quarterfinal slot.

June Navarro

Pagunsan, Que 5 shots off pace

By Musong R. Castillo

PAGUNSAN

VETERAN PRAYAD Marksaeng led the cream of Thailand's pro golf crop in taking control of the Volvo Asian Masters, shooting a five-under-par 67 for a one-stroke lead over two countrymen and two others yesterday.

Thongchai Jaidee and Prom Meesawat scored 68s and were joined by Aussie Terry Pilkadaris and Taiwanese Lin Keng-chi in second even as Filipinos Angelo Que and Juvic Pagunsan opened up with level 72s at the Thai Country Club in Bangkok, Thailand.

Marksaeng, who failed to regain his US PGA Tour card in qualifying earlier this month, was on target the whole day, the only blemish in his 35-32 card coming in the par-3 No. 6, which he bogeyed.

Thais Chapchai Nirat and Chawalit Plaphol were a further stroke back with 69s, which Korean Lee Sung, who was born deaf, Chinese Taipei's Lu Wei-chih and Wang Ter-chang, Malaysia's Iain Steel, Australian Adam Groom and Englishman Chris Rodgers also matched for joint sixth.

The 28-year-old Pagunsan, playing his first tournament since putting a lock on the Asian Tour's Rookie of the Year award, opened up with two bogeys but finished with a 34 to stay in the fight.

Juvic, runner-up to Jose Manuel Lara of Spain in the Hong Kong Open two weeks ago, had five birdies and the same number of bogeys.

Que, winner of the inaugural Carlsberg Masters Vietnam in 2004, was at 3-under after 13 holes before sputtering on the way home to share 29th position along with Pagunsan and eight others.

The $650,000 (around P32.5 million) event is the final leg of the 2006 Asian Tour, which is reserved for the top 60 money earners.

Frankie Miñoza opened up with a bogey 5 on the par-4 first hole before stumbling with double bogeys on Nos. 6 and 15 for a 76 that left the long-time RP ace in a tie for 50th place.

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Aboitiz wins bidding for Magat plant

$530-M offer bested bid of FirstGen unit

By Abigail L. Ho

SN ABOITIZ POWER INC. YESTERDAY WON THE bidding for the 360-megawatt (MW) Magat hydropower plant in Isabela with an offer of $530 million.

This gives Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) its biggest asset sale to date.

The company, a joint venture between Aboitiz Equity Ventures and SN Power Holding Singapore, bested First Generation Northern Energy Corp., the only other bidder, which offered $420.9 million for the asset.

SN Power Holding is a unit of Norway's SN Power Invest AS.

ABOITIZ/ B7

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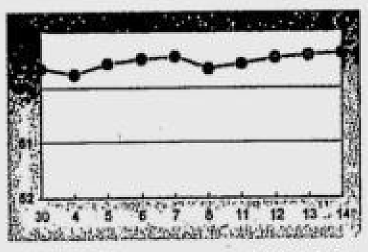

NOVEMBER DECEMBER

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P 49.39 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 14, 2006

¥ 117.42 = $ 1

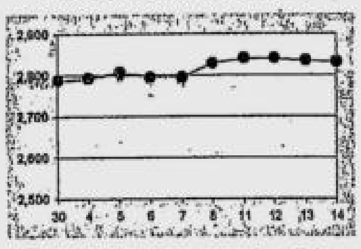
As of 5 p.m., Dec. 14, 2006

GOLD: $627.60-628.10

per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 14, 2006

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Shares close flat

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED FLAT as investors awaited the central bank's interest rate decision later in the day, dealers said.

The composite index slipped 2.59 points to 2,833.27, after moving between 2,824.07 and 2,839.17.

The broader all-share index fell 2.76 points to 1,766.59.

Losers were slightly ahead of gainers 49 to 48, while 69 stocks ended unchanged.

A total of 1.68 billion shares worth P4.1 billion changed hands.

The peso traded at 49.45 to the dollar.

SHARES/ B6

BSP sees 2007 exports rising by 14% to $52.2B

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES HAS UPGRADED ITS EXport growth target for 2007 to 14 percent from an earlier projection of 10.5 percent, despite a likely slowdown in the US economy, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

The latest government forecast, which was based on the export earnings definition of the National Statistics Office, will result in total receipts of $52.21 billion for next year.

"This is based on expectation that there will be continued growth in Europe and an improvement in the economic activity in Japan which will partly offset the impact of a slowdown in the US," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a press briefing.

He said increased trading with China and other Southeast Asian neighbors would likewise fuel growth in export revenue.

The BSP also expects the country's import bill to grow by 14 percent to $61.96 billion.

Based on the BSP's outlook on balance of payments, however, export earnings were assumed to grow by 12 percent to $45.09 billion while the import bill was projected to expand by the same rate to hit $53.8 billion.

Inflows from exports, along with strong remittances from overseas Filipino workers and foreign portfolio and direct investments, are expected to allow the BSP's gross international reserves to hit $24 billion next year.

The increase in import spending already assumes higher oil prices as well as purchases of capital goods and raw materials to support exports and the recovery of manufacturing.

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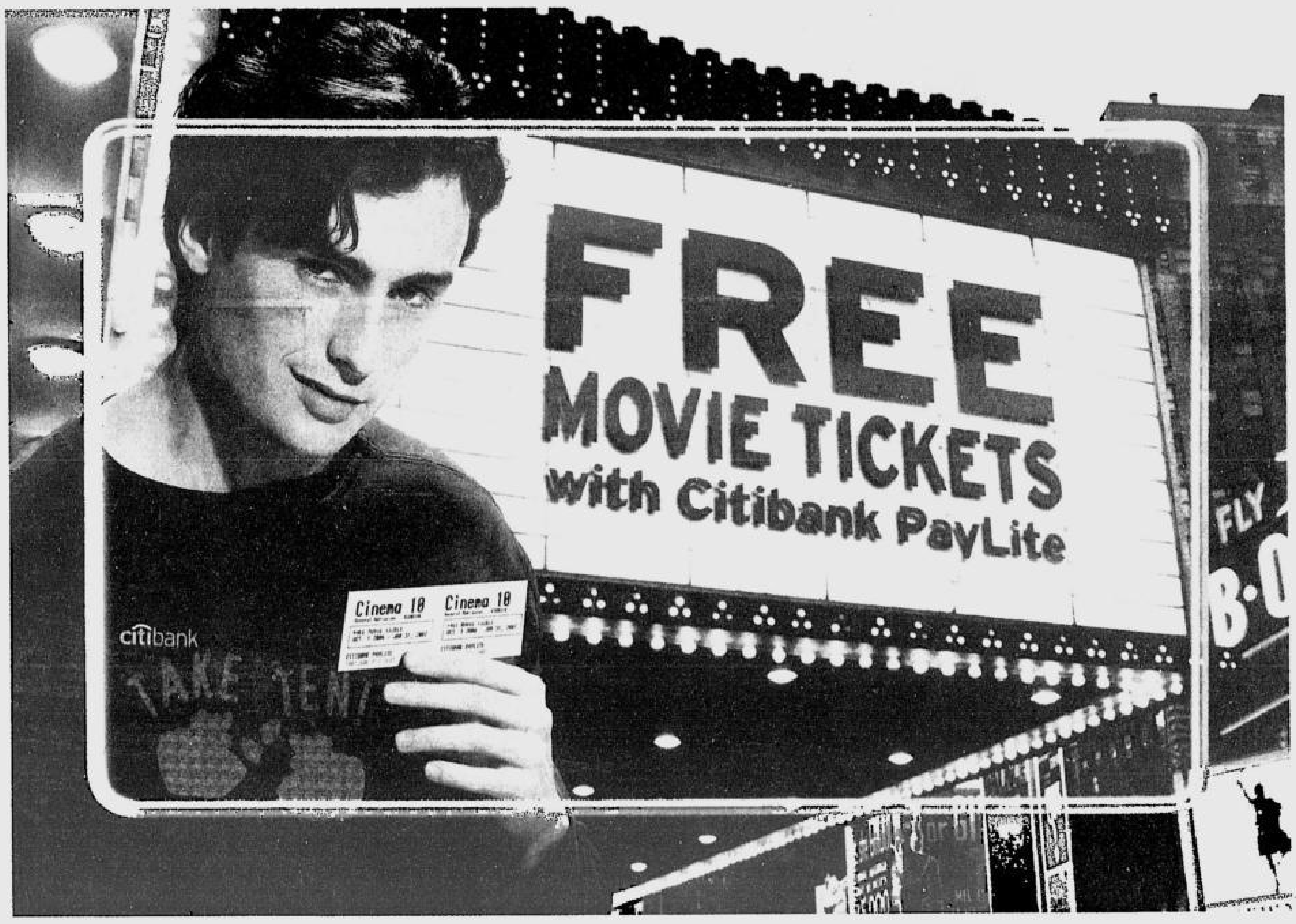

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USDA allows RP mango shipments to US territories

Dole expands operations in N. Luzon

TO EXPAND ITS OPERATIONS in Northern Luzon, Dole Philippines Inc. has signed a contract growing and marketing agreement with the provincial government of La Trinidad, Benguet.

According to Gregory C. Dioquino, Dole Philippines director for Northern Luzon, the memorandum of agreement he signed with La Trinidad Mayor Nestor Fongwan and Agriculture Secretary Arthur C. Yap, would firm up the operations of the agribusiness company on the isalnd.

Previously, Dole focused its operations and resources in the Visayas and Mindanao regions.

Dioquino said that the MOA would expand Dole Philippines' line of freshly packaged fruit and vegetable products.

Under the agreement with the provincial government of La Trinidad, the company would have to strictly abide by the standards on agricultural methods based on the code Good Agricultural Practice (GAP).

"It has been agreed upon that farmers participating in the contract-growing program will work to ensure that the agricultural products are produced organically or with minimal inorganic inputs, (to) comply with the maximum residue limits (MRLs) as set forth by the export markets," Dioquino said.

According to the MOA, the provincial government of La Trinidad will establish a P5-million facility, where the fruits and vegetables would be washed, cleaned and packed.

The Department of Agriculture, on the other hand, would take charge of the technical and training of farmers required by the GAP.

Yap said that the establishment of modern post-harvest facilities would improve agricultural production in the province.

La Trinidad has over 30,000 hectares of vegetable and fruit farms tilled by over 200,000 farmers. *Christine A. Gaylican*

Americans turn to other mango sources in Luzon

By Christine A. Gaylican

PHILIPPINE MANGO EXPORTERS now stand a better chance of cornering the $200-million fresh mango market of the United States as Federal authorities have begun to allow shipments to Guam and Hawaii.

Mangoes from all over the country, except Palawan, 'will be allowed entry to US territories, as well as Hawaii, said Dennis Voboril, US Department of Agriculture director.

Voboril described this development as "an advancement for Philippine exports."

Before, only mangoes grown on Guimaras island were allowed into US territories.

"As for its acceptance to the US mainland, experimental shipments will commence, starting with Luzon mangoes," Voboril added.

He also said that the USDA would grant $1 million for this experimental shipment. The Federal authorities would also undertake a pest risk analysis (PRA) of Philippine mangoes grown elsewhere, to determine if they could safely turn to import sources other than Guimaras island in Western Visayas.

"The results of the pest risk analysis will be the basis for which US quarantine authorities will approve or deny the Philippines' request to also allow mango producers outside of Guimaras Island to export the tropical fruit to the US," Voboril said.

Representatives of the USDA, the Bureau of Plant Industry, the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute and the Food Development Center met recently to flesh out details of the irradiation process on mangoes—a requirement of US quarantine authorities.

"Experts on irradiation ... will be assessing the quality of mangoes irradiated at the standard maximum tolerable level," according to Agriculture Undersecretary Salvador Salacup. "This will require a budget of at least P326,500."

Aside from the limited shipments to the United States, the Philippines has also been delivering fresh mangoes to Japan, Hong Kong, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Belgium.

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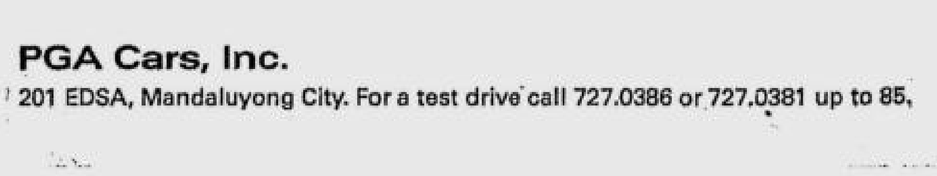

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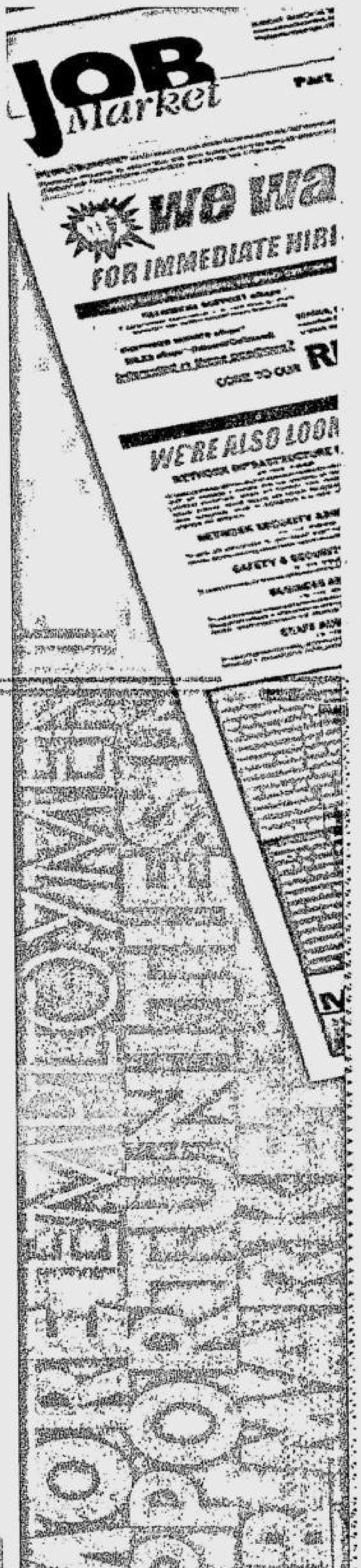

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Foreign chambers seek market reforms

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE JOINT FOREIGN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE of the Philippines has asked Congress to pass two laws related to capital market development reforms that will benefit workers employed in foreign firms.

In separate letters addressed to Senate President Manual Villar and House Speaker Jose de Venecia, JFC asked both chambers to approve bills to establish a Personal Equity and Retirement Account (Pera) and a Pre-Need Code.

"Each bill is important to the hundreds of thousands of Filipinos employed by our members (as well as) millions of employees in the formal sector of the economy who are among the most heavily taxed groups in the country," the group said.

JFC members include the American, Australia-New Zealand, Canadian, European, Japanese and Korean chambers and the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters.

"A large number of our employees have invested their modest savings in pre-need plans, especially for the future education of their children," the group explained.

"(But) some have been victimized by the inability of plan providers to meet contractual obligations to provide benefits when plans mature," it added.

JFC said the Pre-Need Code would seek to prevent such abuses through improved industry regulation and increased penalties for erring policy providers.

On the other hand, the Pera would allow individual taxpayers "who are already subject to the highest personal income tax rates in Asia to save small amounts tax-free."

JFC noted that the Philippines has a low savings rate, adding that a Pera law would encourage Filipinos to save up through something similar like the United States' Individual Retirement Account.

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25-40% of NCR employers deemed delinquent by SSS

Some not paying, others underdeclaring

By Doris C. Dumlao

ABOUT 25-40 PERCENT OF THE EMployers in the National Capital Region were found delinquent in paying their mandatory contributions to state-owned pension fund Social Security System.

SSS officials, however, said the current delinquency rate already showed a big improvement from more than 50 percent in 2001.

They attributed the improvement to the SSS' partnership with local government units and the fielding of more well-trained account officers to map out employers.

Employers considered delinquent included not only those that were not remitting contributions but also those under-reporting the number of their employees.

SSS vice president for NCR group Aurora Ortega said many of the delinquent employers identified were those with 20 or less employees, including printing presses, beauty parlors and small restaurants. She said two newspapers were among those found delinquent. She, however, refused to name them.

Based on current rates and those in the 1990s, Ortega said the SSS' collection of employers' contribution in the NCR—which accounts for 59 percent of the SSS' nationwide collections—was improving.

"Some employers don't pay because they think they won't be discovered. By fielding more account officers who are well trained, they can easily be identified," Ortega said.

Employers found delinquent have to pay penalties to the SSS and benefits to their employees, even if their companies have already shut down, she added.

The SSS has about 250,000 actively paying employers in the NCR but registered companies number about 770,000, of which about 30-40 percent have likely ceased operations.

"We don't have enough people now to check those that ceased operations, but I believe not all (of those that were not in the active payers list) stopped had closed down," Ortega said.

The SSS' partnership with LGUs, Ortega said, was also producing good results because no business establishment can operate without registering with the LGU.

"We are not harsh on employers. We give them alternatives, like *dacion en pago* (payment in kind) or payment on installment basis," Ortega said.

But should a delinquent company choose to pay in installment, she said it would be required to settle the prin-

25-40%/B11

MINING FIRM GETS PERMIT
Colossal Mining Corp. president Tyrone Ong and Natural Resources Secretary Angelo Reyes shake hands following the presentation of the mining firm's environmental compliance documents to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The DENR later granted Colossal Mining a permit to undertake offshore mining operations in Northern Luzon. Ying Minqiang of RT Minerals Group (left) and Colossal Mining COO David Bunevacz (right) joined Ong in the presentation.

RP-Indonesia coal deal opposed

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF Coal Mines (Philcoal) will oppose a bilateral agreement between the Philippine and Indonesian governments for the supply of Indonesian coal to National Power Corp.

The agreement is expected to be signed on Monday.

According to Philcoal, with the long-term coal supply deal, "the government will unduly interfere in a coal mining industry's business which should properly be left to the private sector."

Instead of striking such deals, the group said the government should just let market forces dictate the direction that the coal industry should take.

"The rationale behind such agreement or understanding is to secure stable supply and equally stable prices of coal. However, there is an abundant supply of coal in the world market and its prices have been going down and expect to go down further in the foreseeable future due to its oversupply," Philcoal said.

"The timing to get into such an agreement or understanding by the government puts the private sector apprehensive, as this will create an undue and unfair competition," the group added.

Philcoal urged the government to reconsider its decision to enter a bilateral agreement with Indonesia, considering the oversupply of coal in the world market.

In an earlier interview, Energy Undersecretary Guillermo Balce said the long-term coal supply agreement would be in line with a memorandum of understanding that the government signed with Indonesia in 2003.

If a government-to-government agreement could not be achieved, he said another option would be for the Department of Energy to strike deals with Indonesian national coal company PT Bukit Asam.

At present, however, PT Bukit Asam did not have excess supply that it could sell to the Philippines, he said.

What the government-owned coal firm could do, he said, was to enter into supply agreements with private coal companies in Indonesia.

BSP policy rates unchanged

THE MONETARY BOARD YESTERDAY DEcided to keep the Bangko Sentral's key interest rates steady at 7.5 percent for the overnight borrowing and 9.75 percent for overnight lending.

In its meeting yesterday, the Monetary Board also maintained the tiering system on bank placements, seen as the opening salvo of a monetary easing cycle.

Tiering is a system where the BSP pays a lower rate for short-term money placed by banks in excess of certain threshold levels, to encourage banks to lend out instead of parking all their funds with the monetary authority.

Under this system, only the first P5 billion of short-term money placed with the BSP will be paid the overnight borrowing rate (currently at 7.5 percent). The next P5 billion will yield 200 basis points less than the published rate (5.5 percent) and placements in excess of P10 billion will yield 400 basis points less (3.5 percent).

"The latest inflation readings remain in line with the forecast path, given easing oil prices and a firm peso. Equally important, inflation expectations also remain "well-anchored," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco said.

"The Monetary Board also believes that the policy action in November should be given time to work its way through the various channels of monetary policy, including the credit channel," he said.

Doris C. Dumlao

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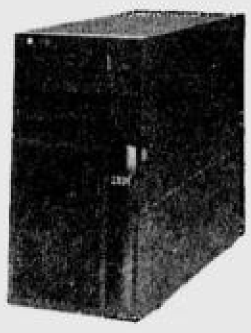

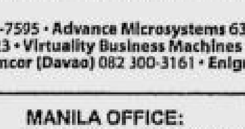

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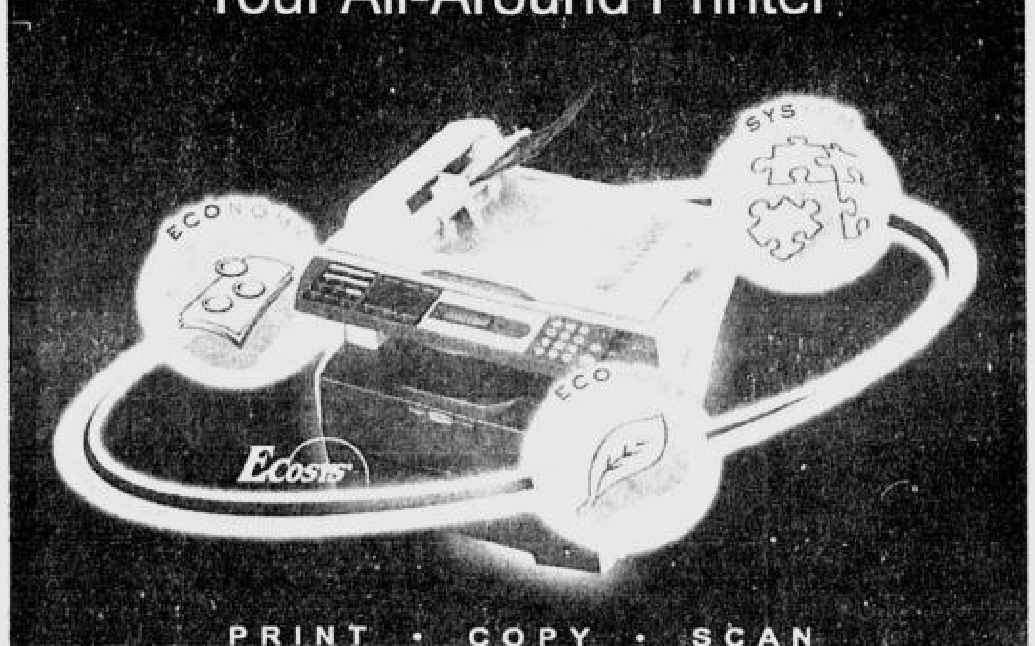

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Petron shuts down refinery unit for repair

By Abigail L. Ho

INDUSTRY GIANT PETRON CORP. HAS IMported 100,000 barrels of gasoline to ensure adequate supply of fuel while its 16,000-barrel-a-day continuous catalytic reformer unit (CCRU) is undergoing repairs.

In a statement to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, the oil firm said the catalyst circulation of the refinery unit had to undergo necessary repairs, and so had to be shut down for the meantime.

Until the CCRU goes back on stream on Dec. 24, Petron will be using a powerformer unit that has been on economic shutdown to perform some of the functions of the CCRU.

Although the CCRU would not be operating for almost two weeks, Petron said it had "ample product inventories" for the month, except for gasoline.

Its December gasoline requirement would be addressed by the 100,000 barrels that it recently imported. The shipment arrived yesterday.

Apart from making the necessary repairs to its existing refinery facilities, Petron is also on track to diversifying into the petrochemicals business, with the ongoing establishment of its Petro Fluidized Catalytic Cracker (PetroFCC), which would enable it to produce more high-value white products and petrochemical-grade propylene.

As part of the company's $300-million refinery master plan, Petron will also put up a BTX unit that will produce aromatics such as benzene and toluene and expand its mixed xylene production capacity.

"Given the demand and supply imbalance for petrochemicals, we are very optimistic that these projects will sustain our growth momentum for years to come," Petron president Khalid Al-Faddagh had earlier said.

Petron closed the first nine months with a net income of P4 billion, 16.4 percent lower than the P4.78 billion posted in the same period last year.

The oil refiner attributed its lower-than-expected profit to inventory losses due to an "unprecedented fall in (international) oil prices" that it had to reflect in pump prices despite having to use product inventory bought at higher rates.

After reaching a high of $72.24 a barrel in August, Petron said the regional benchmark Dubai crude fell to as low as $54.92 a barrel in September.

Export margins, particularly for industrial fuel oil, were likewise adversely affected by the sudden price drop. Sales of mixed xylene, however, remained robust.

GOINGS ON

DPC's new system

DIRECTORIES PHILIPPINES Corp. has acquired the information management system of Hong-Kong-based PCCW Directories to integrate and modernize Yellow Pages publishing across print, electronic and mobile platforms.

DPC president Ricardo D. Bautista and PCCWDL chief executive officer Bernard Lee formalized the multimillion-peso agreement, covering license, training and maintenance fees, in simple ceremonies in Hong Kong recently.

PCCWDL started developing the system for its own Yellow Pages business in 2001. Its four subsystems—IPS sales & customer management modules, production and listing management modules, product management modules, and peripheral support modules, covering incentive schemes management and billing integration—can be implemented independently. In the last few years, PCCWDL added other enhancement modules that have made the system an intelligent and powerful Yellow Pages management suite.

PVB's monitoring system

PHILIPPINE VETERANS Bank (PVB) said it had completed the implementation of its Anti Money Laundering (AML) system.

"PVB is the first in the country to comply with Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Circular 495, despite the deadline being extended to October 2007. This manifests PVB's strong support for the government's efforts to curb illegal financial operations in the country," said Veterans Bank president Jun Balbido.

The circular requires local banks to adopt an electronic money laundering transaction monitoring system.

PVB acquired the Anti Money Laundering Solution from SAS, a leading software provider of business intelligence solutions and applications.

CebuPac flies to Bangkok

CEBU PACIFIC (CEB), the country's low fare leader and leading domestic carrier, yesterday inaugurated its maiden flight from Manila to Bangkok, Thailand.

CEB's Manila-Bangkok service is scheduled to operate every Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. The flight departs from Manila at 10:45 p.m. and arrives in Bangkok at 12:50 a.m. the following day. The flight then leaves Bangkok at 1:35 a.m. to arrive back in Manila at 5:40 a.m.

CEB will be operating from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila and the new Suvarnabhumi Airport in Bangkok.

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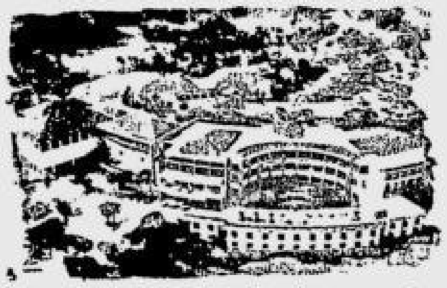

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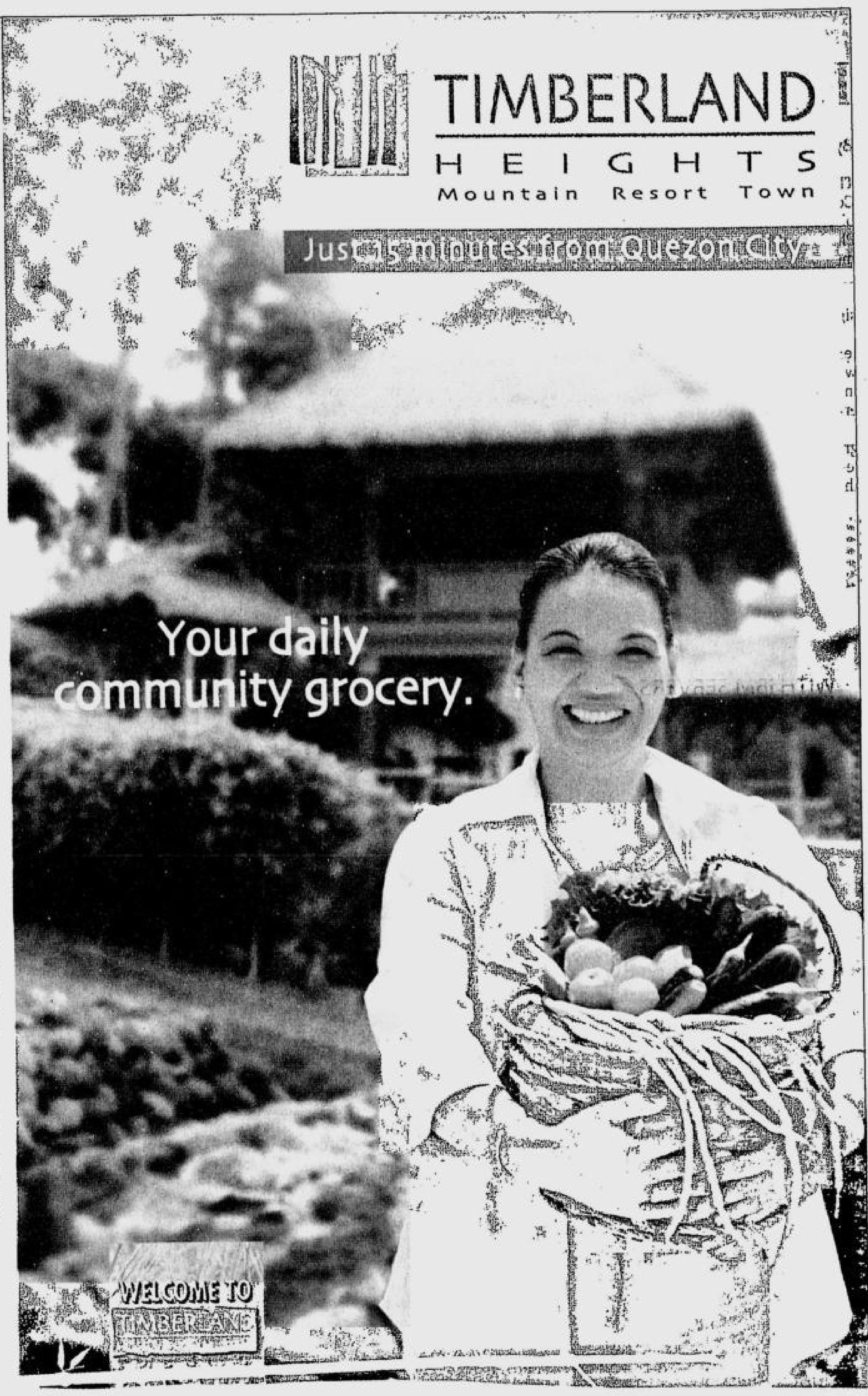

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Sun subscribers seen to hit 2.2M

Digitel set to offer 3G services

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

DIGITEL MOBILE PHILIPPINES Inc. (Digitel Mobile), or more popularly Sun Cellular mobile phone service brand, expects to build up its mobile phone subscriber base to 2.2 million this year, a company official yesterday said at the sidelines of the firm's listing anniversary at the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) in Pasig City.

Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc. (Digitel) senior vice president William Pamintuan said that the mobile phone firm of the Gokongwei group has expanded its line capacity to accommodate up to 6 million subscribers from two million last year.

The target of 2.2 million this year will represent a 29-percent growth from about 1.7 million subscribers last year, Pamintuan said.

Also, Digitel vice chair James Go said that the firm is preparing to roll out its third generation cellular service over the next three months.

Go said Digitel would allot $200 million a year for the expansion of its mobile phone business, which will be funded through internally generated cash and borrowings from export credit agencies.

Today, Digitel has over 1,000 cell sites.

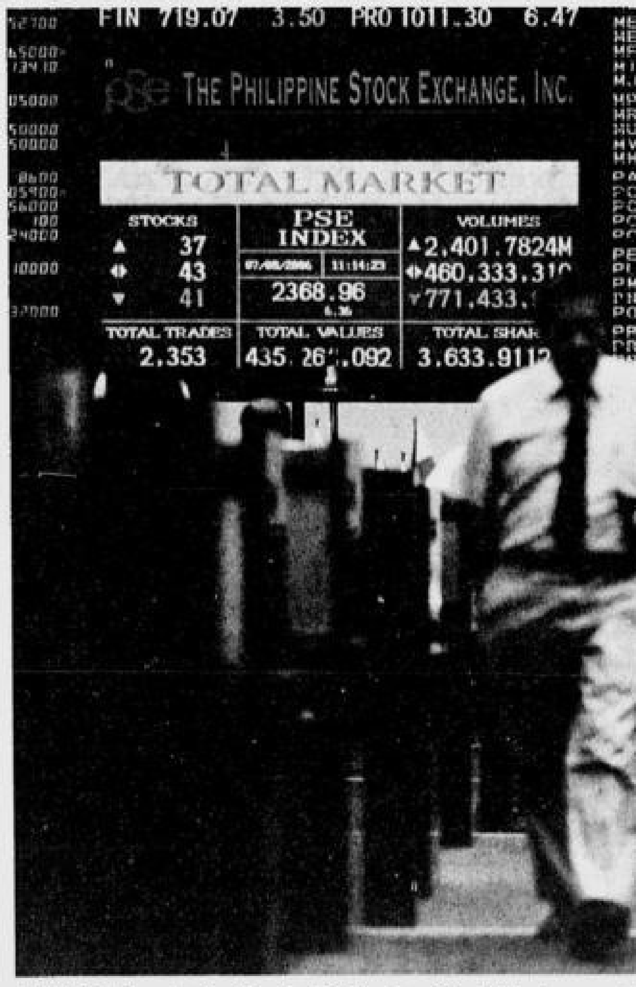
In terms of wireless broadband, the Digitel group is also investing around $50 million in the roll-out of Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL), a technology for transmitting digital data at a high bandwidth on existing copper telephone lines to homes and businesses, officials said.

To pave the way for the launch of its Sun Cellular 3G cellular service next year, Digitel Mobile will invest more than P6.3 billion to roll out new telecom infrastructure nationwide.

Digitel Mobile's planned 3G services will include video calling, wireless broadband access and high-speed downlink packet access-services which are already being offered by competitors Smart Communications Inc. and Globe Telecom Inc.

PSE chief predicts more, but smaller, IPOs in 2007

By Daxim L. Lucas



A TRADER walks inside the Philippine Stock Exchange at the Makati financial district. According to PSE's Francis Lim, more and more firms are now interested in raising money by selling their stocks on the exchange. REUTERS

THE LOCAL STOCK MARKET may see more firms going public next year, but it is unlikely that any of them will be as big as the recent initial public offering of the Philippine National Oil Co.-Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC).

According to Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) president Francis Lim, he has held recent discussions with firms that are interested in raising money by selling their stocks on the exchange in 2007.

"It looks like there will be more of them, but not in the same magnitude as this one," he told reporters, referring to PNOC-EDC's P16.7-billion IPO, the shares of which debuted on the stock market last Wednesday.

Dearth

Lim declined to identify the firms that may go public next year, citing confidentiality agreements. But he said that he is trying to persuade broadcasting firm GMA Network Inc. and oil refiner Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. to proceed with their IPO plans.

On top of this, the PSE chief said he has received three times more inquiries from firms interested in listing their shares on the exchange over the last quarter compared to the number of discussions he'd had in the same quarter of last year.

The local stock market continues to experience a dearth of IPOs, despite its relatively strong performance in recent months.

Dampened

The few firms that have listed their shares this year include power firm First Gen Corp., which raised P8.5 billion last February; online broker Citisec-online.com, which raised P149 million in July; tuna canner Alliance Tuna International Inc., which raised P160 million last month; and biodiesel firm Chemrez Technologies Inc., which raised P1.5 billion also last month.

According to the PSE, capital raised from IPOs of stock and additional share offers of listed companies rose to P37.4 billion as of October from P29.8 billion last year—excluding the money raised recently from the IPO of PNOC-EDC and other more recent issues.

Lim conceded, however, that the Philippine Stock Exchange Index' strong performance this year is dampened by the fact that trading volume in the local market remains thin relative to the bourses of neighboring countries.

"We are trying to address this issue by developing linkages with other stock exchanges around Asean," he said.

Despite Lim's optimistic assessment for next year, the IPO activity in the local exchange remains muted compared to the activity seen during the boom years of the 1990s.

Dwindling values

In 1994, for example, the stock market saw IPO activity peak when 21 companies listed on the stock exchange, including SM Prime Holdings Inc., Megaworld Corp., Universal Robina Corp., Petron Corp., Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Cosmos Bottling Corp. and Cebu Holdings Inc. That year, stock offers raised a total of P37.4 billion.

Over the years, the value of stock offers dwindled, and reached a low of P186.14 million in 2003, when four companies braved the market.

In 2005, with the economy taking a positive turn, the market started to flourish again. That year, stock offers raised a total of P33.5 billion.

Trans-Asia to buy all issued shares of power company

PUBLICLY LISTED TRANS-ASIA OIL AND Energy Development Corp. has secured the nod of its board of directors to buy all the issued shares of CIP II Power Corp. from Ascendas Utilities Pte. Ltd. of Singapore.

Company officials yesterday could not be reached to provide more details on the deal.

In a separate disclosure, Trans-Asia Oil said CIP II Power is a Philippine company engaged in power generation and distribution within the Carmelray Industrial Park II- Special Economic Zone in Calamba City, Laguna.

Ascendas Utilities Pte. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Ascendas Investment Pte. Ltd. of Singapore.

The company has suspended trading of the shares of Trans-Asia Oil pending disclosure of the terms and conditions of the deal.

In 2004, Trans-Asia entered into an electricity supply agreement with Guimaras Electric Cooperative Inc. (Guimelco), the lone electricity distributor on the island of Guimaras, and started the construction of a 3.4-megawatt (MW) bunker C-fired diesel generator power station on the island.

The construction of the Guimaras power plant was completed in February 2005. Commercial operations started on June 26, 2005.

Trans-Asia has been investing in various other operating companies, making cash placements.

Its largest investment is still Trans-Asia Power Generation Corp., of which it owns 50 percent. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Zuellig sells stake in Interphil

LOCAL PHARMACEUTICAL FIRM ZUELLIG Pharma Corp. has sold its 31 percent, or 128.2 million class B shares, in publicly listed Interphil Laboratories Inc. to a British Virgin Island-registered affiliate, Khatabi Holdings Ltd., the company said in a disclosure.

Zuellig Pharma Corp. is affiliated with Zuellig Pharma, the leading distributor of healthcare and pharmaceutical products across Asia.

Interphil last closed at 82 centavos a share.

According to Interphil, Khatabi is a subsidiary of The Zuellig Group Inc., whose businesses span healthcare and pharmaceuticals; agribusiness manufacturing and distribution; agricultural equipment supply and materials handling, and properties.

Interphil said that it needs to lower its manpower costs and cut its operating expenses to make it more profitable.

Khatabi, among other things will undertake the restructuring and rationalization of Interphil's business, including the expansion of its activities in the area of generic pharmaceutical products manufacturing, the company said in its disclosure. These activities are supposed to help Interphil post a turnaround to profit.

As of the first nine months, Interphil recorded a net loss of P48.9 million against losses of P126.5 million in the same period in 2005. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Shares close flat

From page B1

"The market remains in a consolidation phase in the absence of new leads," said James Lago of Westlink Global Equities.

Investors believe the central bank is now biased toward policy easing, but they are divided as to when a rate cut will be implemented.

"Easing inflation and a firmer peso suggest that the central bank now has flexibility in monetary policy," Singapore-based DBS Bank said in a market note.

"(But) the central bank is more likely to adopt a conservative stance by maintaining its policy rate, and take its cue from the (US central bank) to lower rates gradually only in the first half of 2007." Top-traded, newly listed energy firm PNOC-EDC fell 40 centavos to P4.15—still above its initial public offering price of P3.20.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone was down P15 to P2,415, while Ayala Land advanced 25 centavos to P14.75. *AFP*

Furniture makers get ₱80M worth of Japan orders

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TWO PHILIPPINE FURNITURE MAKERS would split between themselves some P80 million, or $1.76 million, worth of orders from Japanese buyers during a furniture expo held in Tokyo last November, according to the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions.

Trade Assistant Secretary Felicitas Agoncillo-Reyes said Craft Mill Inc. and Maze Manufacturing Co. were the only Filipino firms that took part in the International Furniture Fair Tokyo on Nov. 22-25.

Craft Mill makes gift and storage boxes, photo frames and other home and office items, while Maze Manufacturing makes contemporary furniture and home accessories.

"We were able to exceed the target sales even with only two companies joining the IFFT," Reyes said. "The Philippine delegation bested other Southeast Asian participants mainly because of product design, which is the country's lasting competitive edge."

Reyes explained that buyers favored Philippine products in the IFFT for their visual appeal, functionality and natural appearance.

DISCLOSURES

LAWYER Erlinda Calangi has resigned as compliance officer of **Alliance Tuna International Inc.** in order to avoid any possible conflicts with her duties as legal counsel and corporate secretary of the company. Rajat Balain has been appointed as the acting compliance officer by chief operating officer Jonathan Dee.

***

CITISECONLINE.COM Inc. has disclosed the acquisition of 50,000 shares by vice president Nikos J. Bautista for P5.20 each on Dec. 13. His wife Katherine A. Bautista also acquired 30,000 shares on the same date for the same price.

***

A. Soriano Corp. has disclosed the purchase of 185,000 shares by wholly-owned subsidiary Anscor Consolidated Corp. for P2.85 each on Dec. 13. ***Compiled by Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research***

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 14, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.4	15,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	44.5	44.5	43.5	44	2,567,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	63.5	63.5	63	63.5	6,869,200
China Banking Corp.	700	705	700	700	3,040
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.47	0.48	0.47	0.48	810,000
Equitable Pci Bank Inc.	79	79	78.5	79	4,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	51	51	50.5	51	1,031,400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	26.5	26.5	25	25	211,700
Security Bank Corp.	64.5	65.5	64.5	65.5	110,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	49.5	50	49.5	50	23,200
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citisecoline.Com Inc.	5.2	5.4	5	5	570,000
Filipino Fund Inc	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	6,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	2,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1640	1640	1640	1640	1,360
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.34	1.36	1.34	1.34	113,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	265	267.5	265	267.5	3,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2115	2120	2115	2120	1,710
Ivantage Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.48	1.5	1,229,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
Pnoc Energy Dev. Corp.	4.4	4.4	4.1	4.15	240,968,000
First Gen Corp.	55	55	55	55	437,800
First Phil Hldgs Corp	59.5	60.5	59.5	60.5	1,578,800
Manila Electric Co. A	54	54	53.5	53.5	255,800
Manila Electric Co. B	55	55.5	54	54.5	1,186,000
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	1,694,000
Petron Corp.	4.05	4.1	4.05	4.05	5,506,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	2,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	21.25	21.25	21	21.25	268,200
Jollibee Foods Corp.	41	41	41	41	201,900
Rfm Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	83,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.65	2.7	2.65	2.7	105,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	130,000
San Miguel Corp. A	66	66	65.5	66	44,400
San Miguel Corp. B	71.5	71.5	70.5	71.5	176,300
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.06	2.16	2.06	2.14	3,629,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19.25	19.5	19.25	19.5	426,900
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.1	1.14	1.08	1.1	16,024,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	2,167,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.5	2,877,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	46,000
Republic Cement Corp.	4	4	3.95	4	294,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5	5.2	5	5	10,154,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	10,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	0.72	0.73	0.71	0.72	22,710,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.185	0.2	0.185	0.19	22,360,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	160,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	52,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	2,000,000
Ayala Corp.	490	490	485	485	115,610
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.6	0.7	0.6	0.7	90,190,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	6.3	6.5	6.3	6.5	1,796,000
Alliance Global Group Inc	7.6	7.6	7.3	7.3	15,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.06	0.0625	0.06	0.06	14,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.8	2.8	372,000
Apc Group Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	4,970,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	0.0095	33,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.95	0.99	0.95	0.97	9,330,000
Atn Holdings Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	25,000
Atn Holdings Inc. B	2	2	2	2	2,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3	3	3	3	1,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.16	129,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	2.22	2.24	2.18	2.22	12,803,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.4	6.1	6.2	6,549,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	3.55	3.6	3.55	3.6	110,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.9	1.9	320,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	9	9.1	9	9	288,000
Keppel Holdings	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	30,000
Medco Holdings	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	400,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	300,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.35	4.05	4.05	398,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.62	1.64	1.6	1.62	222,000
Pacifica	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	7,800,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	2,430,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.5	11,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	830,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	2,000,000
Sm Investments Corp.	302.5	302.5	297.5	300	328,910
South China Resources Inc	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	100,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.185	0.215	0.185	0.215	44,780,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.135	0.12	0.135	80,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14.5	14.75	14.5	14.75	6,376,500
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	80,000
Belle Corp.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.14	2,397,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.62	1.62	1,361,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,300,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	199,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	5,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	15,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.32	620,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.55	4,690,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	300,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	2,500,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.86	1.88	1.82	1.82	32,360,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.65	2.7	2.65	2.7	50,000
Interport Res.	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	210,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.008	138,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.3	1.32	295,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.52	0.53	0.5	0.51	9,650,000
Megaworld Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.2	2.24	73,908,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.36	0.36	1,250,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	1,040,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	16	16.25	15.75	16	11,157,500
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.7	0.72	0.69	0.7	56,230,000
Sm Development Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6	1,178,000
Sm Prime Holdings Inc.	9.9	9.9	9.8	9.9	4,345,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	40,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	3,900,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	20.75	21	20.75	21	67,900
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1	1	1	1	20,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.88	1.88	1.8	1.8	11,475,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1245	1250	1245	1245	21,310
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6	6.4	6	6.1	12,312,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2420	2420	2410	2415	362,890
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.185	0.185	2,300,000
Imperial Res.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	8,000,000
Ionics Inc.	2.14	2.16	2.14	2.16	650,000
Ipvg Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.05	4.1	394,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	1,200,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	6,100,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	20,000
Transpacific Broadband	4.8	5.4	4.65	5.4	1,424,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	66,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	1,248,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	534,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	19	19	18.75	19	43,700
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	20,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.28	1.3	1.18	1.3	80,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2.18	2.22	2.16	2.18	2,385,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	3,850,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	3,190,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.8	8.9	8.8	8.9	54,000
Far Eastern University	780	780	780	780	350
Ipeople Inc	3.1	3.1	3.05	3.05	658,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.12	2.14	2.08	2.08	1,145,000
Paxys Inc.	18	18	18	18	122,900
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2	723,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	6.3	6.3	6.3	6.3	262,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	83,600,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.5	8.7	8.5	8.6	2,345,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.4	116,000
Benguet Corp. B	24	24.5	24	24.5	65,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	50,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	5,940,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	790,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	121,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.024	56,300,000
Omico Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	51,700,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.1	4.1	8,346,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	29,800
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.68	0.69	0.67	0.69	5,520,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.42	1.5	1.4	1.5	16,084,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	540,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	3,200,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1	1	1	1	100,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	150,000
Pnoc Exploration Corp.-B	16.5	17	16.5	17	6,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10	10	10	10	332,000

CURRENCIES

December 14, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.756544	1.000000	49.4680
Japan	Yen	0.006437	0.008508	0.4209
United Kingdom	Pound	1.488727	1.967800	97.3431
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097354	0.128682	6.3656
Switzerland	Franc	0.627369	0.829256	41.0216
Canada	Dollar	0.653998	0.864454	42.7628
Singapore	Dollar	0.491103	0.649140	32.1117
Australia	Dollar	0.594955	0.786411	38.9022
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.006908	2.652731	131.2253
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.201880	0.266845	13.2003
Brunei	Dollar	0.489514	0.647040	32.0078
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000110	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.021481	0.028393	1.4045
Uae	Dirham	0.206030	0.272331	13.4717
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.321800	65.3868
Korea	Won	0.000820	0.001084	0.0536
China	Yuan**	0.096664	0.127771	6.3206
India	Rupee	0.016932	0.022381	1.1071
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.213532	0.282247	13.9622
Mexico	New Peso	0.069734	0.092175	4.5597
New Zealand	Dollar	0.521791	0.689703	34.1182
Norway	Kroner	0.122658	0.162130	8.0202
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012431	0.016431	0.8128
South Africa	Rand	0.108429	0.143322	7.0899
Sweden	Kroner	0.110834	0.146501	7.2471
Syria	Pound	0.014574	0.019264	0.9530
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023288	0.030782	1.5227

Source: REUTERS' FOREX CLOSING PRICES as of NY Time Dec. 13, 2006

* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian Time Closing Rate as of Dec. 13, 2006

Oil company commissions double-hull fuel transport

By Abigail L. Ho

TO PREVENT ANOTHER MASSIVE OIL spill from happening, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. has chartered a brand new double-hull vessel to serve its inter-island fuel transport requirements.

During the blessing and commissioning of the MT Petro Cara yesterday, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the use of double-hull vessels would minimize the incidence of oil spills in the country.

"We are happy that Shell has been able to acquire the services of this vessel," Lotilla said. "This will ensure the safety of the transport of oil products."

Unlike single-hull or single-floor tankers, double-hull or double-floor tankers can withstand rough seas, and ensure that no fuel will leak from its cargo hold even if it sinks.

"Double hulls are significantly safer than single hulls in terms of maintaining the cargo integrity and preventing or minimizing spillage and associated marine pollution in the event of an accident," Shell said in a statement issued during yesterday's ceremonies.

"In case of grounding or collision where the outer hull is penetrated, the damage is likely to be limited to seawater flooding of the double hull, while cargo-carrying main areas of the ship remain intact," the oil firm added. "Thus, the implementation of the double hull regulation in the Philippines is a significant step towards ensuring the protection of the environment."

Tankers carrying heavy-grade liquid fuels or toxic materials are required to have double hulls by 2015, according to the United Nations' International Maritime Organization.

Here in the country, President Macapagal-Arroyo accelerated the deadline for the double-hull requirement to 2008.

To enable local vessel owners to comply with this requirement, Lotilla said the Development Bank of the Philippines would offer a loan facility specifically designed for the construction of double-hull vessels.

The MT Petro Cara, owned by Transoil Corp. and managed by Translift Ship Management Inc., cost around $14 million to build.

DBP president and chief executive Reynaldo David said there were currently some loan applications in the pipeline for such projects.

Aboitiz wins ...

From page B1

SN Aboitiz would be officially declared the winner of the bidding upon completion of the post-bid requirements and the issuance of the notice of award.

"We continuously work on privatizing and transferring these power facilities to deserving bidders," PSALM president Nieves Osorio said in a statement yesterday.

"PSALM remains steadfast in its commitment to uphold the stringent requirements set in the transaction documents for the generation and transmission assets of the government," she added.

She said the recent signing of a transition supply contract between National Power Corp. and Manila Electric Co. would help PSALM sell more Napocor assets in the coming months.

In previous auctions, the absence of a TSC had discouraged prospective bidders from pushing through with their intentions to bid for certain plants, an example of which was the 600-MW Calaca coal-fired power plant.

Almost all prospective bidders had said Napocor's assets would be more attractive if these had power supply contracts for at least 50 percent of their capacity.

In the case of the Magat plant, PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity trading Froilan Tampinco said PSALM was able to secure supply contracts for 95 MW of the plant's capacity.

Under the asset purchase agreement for the Magat plant, the winning bidder will have to remit a 40-percent down payment on or before the closing date.

The balance can then be amortized in 14 equal semi-annual payments with an interest of 12 percent a year compounded semi-annually.

The winning bidder should also post a performance bond equivalent to 2 percent of the purchase price. This bond will be reduced every year equivalent to 2 percent of the aggregate amount of the deferred payments.

Apart from the down payment and the performance bond, the winning bidder is also required to post a deferred payment security deposit equivalent to at least the next deferred payment in the form of cash, currently dated manager's check or an irrevocable standby letter of credit acceptable to PSALM.

Since 2004, PSALM had sold seven Napocor hydropower facilities, including the 3.5-MW Talomo plant in Davao for $1.37 million, the 1.6-MW Agusan plant in Bukidnon for $1.53 million, the 1.8-MW Barit plant in Camarines Sur for $480,000, the 0.4-MW Cawayan plant in Sorsogon for $410,410, the 1.2-MW Loboc plant in Bohol for $1.42 million, and the 112-MW Pantabangan-Masiway plant package in Nueva Ecija for $129 million.

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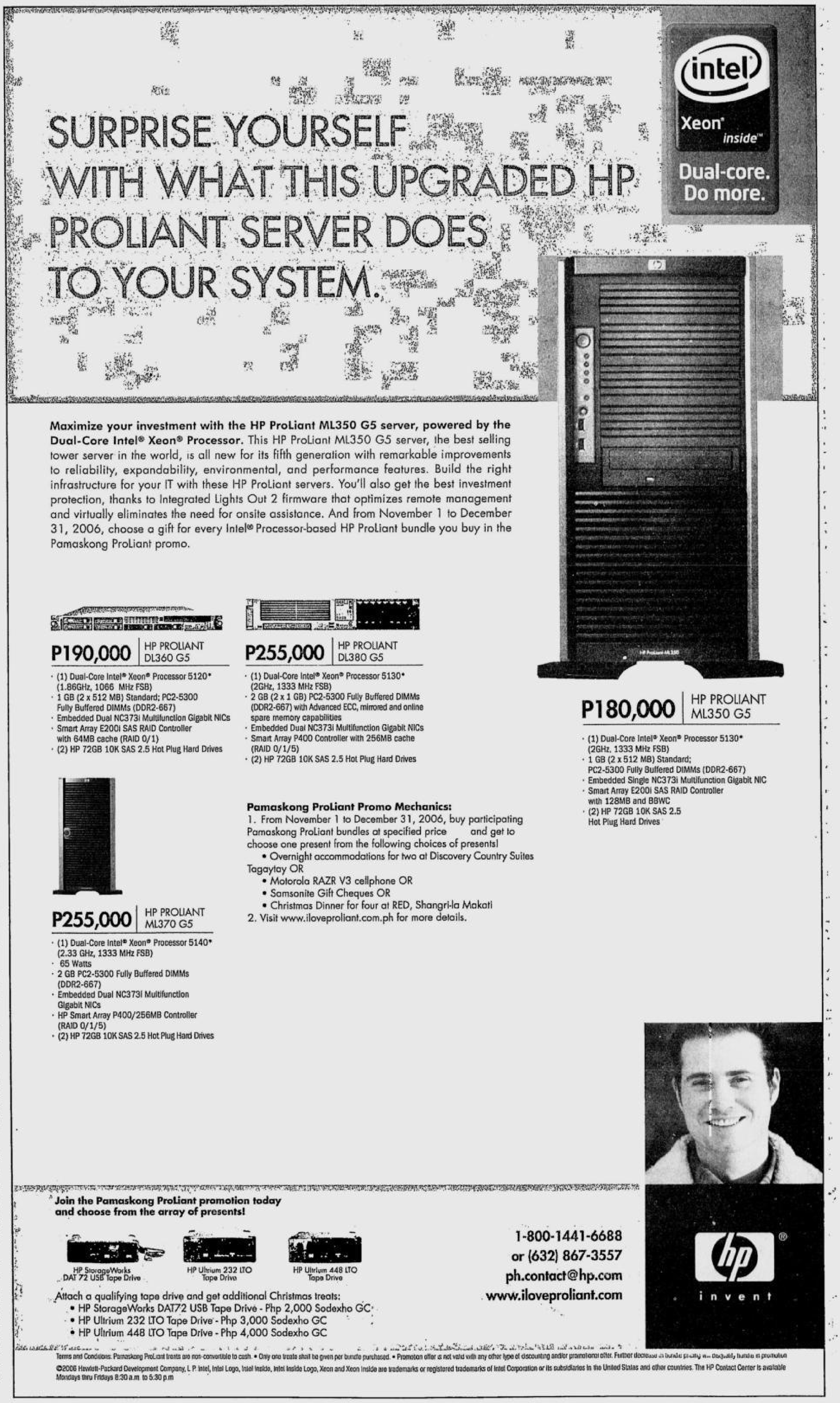
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US retail sales jump

WASHINGTON—US RETAIL sales jumped sharply in November as shoppers went on a spending spree that will reinforce the Federal Reserve's view that the cooling housing market has not hurt the rest of the economy.

Data from the Commerce Department on Wednesday showed retail sales gained 1 percent last month, notching their largest rise since July.

Retail sales excluding autos and also gasoline, a reading viewed as a more reliable core measure of household spending, increased 0.9 percent. It was the largest rise since the 2.5 percent gain notched in January.

US stocks were initially boosted by the news and the Dow Jones industrial average touched a record high, but profit-taking pared gains and the index ended at 12,317.50 for a modest 1.92-point gain.

"The holiday sales season has started in very good form.

This could mean consumer spending growth of 3 percent or better, and GDP growth could be closer to 2.5 percent," said Richard DeKaser, chief economist at National City Corp. in Cleveland, Ohio.

US economic growth slowed in the third quarter to a 2.2 percent annual rate and many economists had expected it to fade further in the final three months of 2006—a view challenged by Wednesday's data that prompted other financial firms to lift their forecasts.

"We boosted our fourth quarter ... GDP (gross domestic product) forecast to up 2.6 percent from up 2.3 percent," economists at Morgan Stanley said on a note to clients.

"Spillover impacts from housing to consumption have clearly been minimal to this point, as a sizable recent acceleration in real income growth has provided considerable support to spending," they said.

The numbers also endorsed the view of Fed chair Ben Bernanke, who said in late November that there had been little evidence the slowing housing market has had a negative effect on the wider economy.

Analysts had forecast a 0.2 percent rise in retail sales, compared with a 0.1 percent decline in October, and a 0.3 percent gain in retail sales excluding autos.

Sales at department stores and clothing stores were both flat, but gained a whopping 4.6 percent at electronics and appliance stores. *Reuters*

Asia markets hike on US sales

Sony leading surge; Australia hits high

SINGAPORE—ASIA STOCKS ROSE ON Thursday, led by electronics firms such as Sony, after surprisingly strong retail sales figures from the United States raised hopes for the key year-end shopping season.

Oil prices edged up nearly half a percent ahead of an OPEC meeting to decide whether to deepen output cuts, building on gains on Wednesday following US government data showing a surprising drop in crude stockpiles.

Financial bookmakers in London forecast the FTSE 100 index would open marginally higher.

Australian stocks hit a record high, South Korea's benchmark index jumped 2.5 percent and Japan's Nikkei closed at its highest level in seven months.

"Japanese stocks are getting a boost after the US reported solid retail sales for November, which prompted investors to expect stronger Christmas sales," said Tsuyoshi Segawa, an equity strategist at Shinko Securities.

Tokyo's Nikkei rose 0.8 percent, while MSCI's broadest index of shares elsewhere in Asia gained 1.2 percent early yesterday afternoon.

Sony Corp. shares rose 1.8 percent and cameras and copiers maker Canon Inc. gained 1.7 percent.

In Seoul, LG Electronics soared 4.1 percent and Samsung Electronics rose 2 percent.

Australia's S&P ASX 200 rose 1.6 percent to close at an all-time high, with Qantas Airways Ltd. up 3.7 percent after agreeing to an $8.7 billion takeover bid led by Macquarie Bank and private equity firm Texas Pacific.

The main indexes in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan all posted gains, while China's benchmark index hit a record high.

US retail sales rose 1 percent in November, exceeding expectations and marking the strongest growth in four months, suggesting consumer demand in Asia's main export market has held up even as the housing market suffers a sharp slowdown.

Coming after a report showing healthy jobs growth in November, the data weakened the argument that the Federal Reserve would cut rates to stem any further weakness in the economy—giving the dollar a lift.

"We should not be too pessimistic about the future course of the US economy, which is why the dollar bounced," said Kikuko Takeda, currency strategist at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ.

"There is a possibility the Fed does not cut rates next year but keeps a wait-and-see stance."

But many market players still expect the Fed to cut rates in 2007, undermining the dollar's yield advantage even as other major central banks appear poised to boost interest rates.

The euro was steady at $1.3215 yesterday afternoon, holding below the 20-month high of $1.3370 struck earlier this month. The dollar, which rose more than half a percent against the yen on Wednesday, was also steady around 117.53 yen.

The single currency was little changed around 155.30 yen, below an all-time high of 155.50 struck on Wednesday.

Japanese government bond prices dipped, taking their cue from a sharp slide in US Treasuries, but trade was quiet as investors awaited the Bank of Japan's influential tankan survey of business sentiment on Friday.

"The market might be caught in a tug of war between losses in US Treasuries and fading expectations for a rate hike here," said Goldman Sachs JGB strategist Hiroyoshi Sandaya.

Japan's March 10-year futures edged 0.09 point lower to 134.79, above a session low of 134.63. The benchmark 10-year yield rose 1.5 basis points to 1.620 percent.

US light crude for January delivery rose 25 cents to $61.62 a barrel, to add to a 35-cent gain on Wednesday.

OPEC meets on Thursday in Nigeria to set output policy.

Ministers from the producer cartel agree the market is oversupplied, but some say winter, when annual demand in the northern hemisphere peaks, is the wrong time to cut supply.

Underlining this argument, US government data on Wednesday showed crude stocks fell by 4.3 million barrels last week as imports declined.

"OPEC seems to be edging away from cutting oil production at today's meeting and delaying any decision until January," said Tobin Gorey of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. *Reuters*

Qantas accepts takeover offer

SYDNEY—AUSTRALIAN FLAG CARRIER AND national icon Qantas accepted an increased $8.7-billion offer on Thursday from a private equity group, a day after rejecting a lower bid.

For the world's biggest airline takeover, the Qantas board unanimously backed the improved price of $4.40 a share from a group led by Australia's Macquarie Bank and US-based Texas Pacific Group.

"The directors believe this offer allows Qantas shareholders to realize significant value for their shares that has not been fully recognised in (the) public market," Qantas chair Margaret Jackson said.

As well as raising the price by 10 cents, the consortium also dropped a demand it be paid a "break fee" if the deal falls through.

It must receive approval from 90 percent of Qantas shareholders and will be reviewed by the government's Foreign Investment Review Board, which can block any transaction it believes is not in the national interest.

Jackson, who flagged her departure from the board after six years, acknowledged many Australians would be nervous about the sale of the national airline but stressed the consortium was not dominated by foreign investors.

"I know that some people will feel uneasy about this transaction. Qantas is an institution that the public love and trust but ... Qantas will still be majority Australian owned," she said.

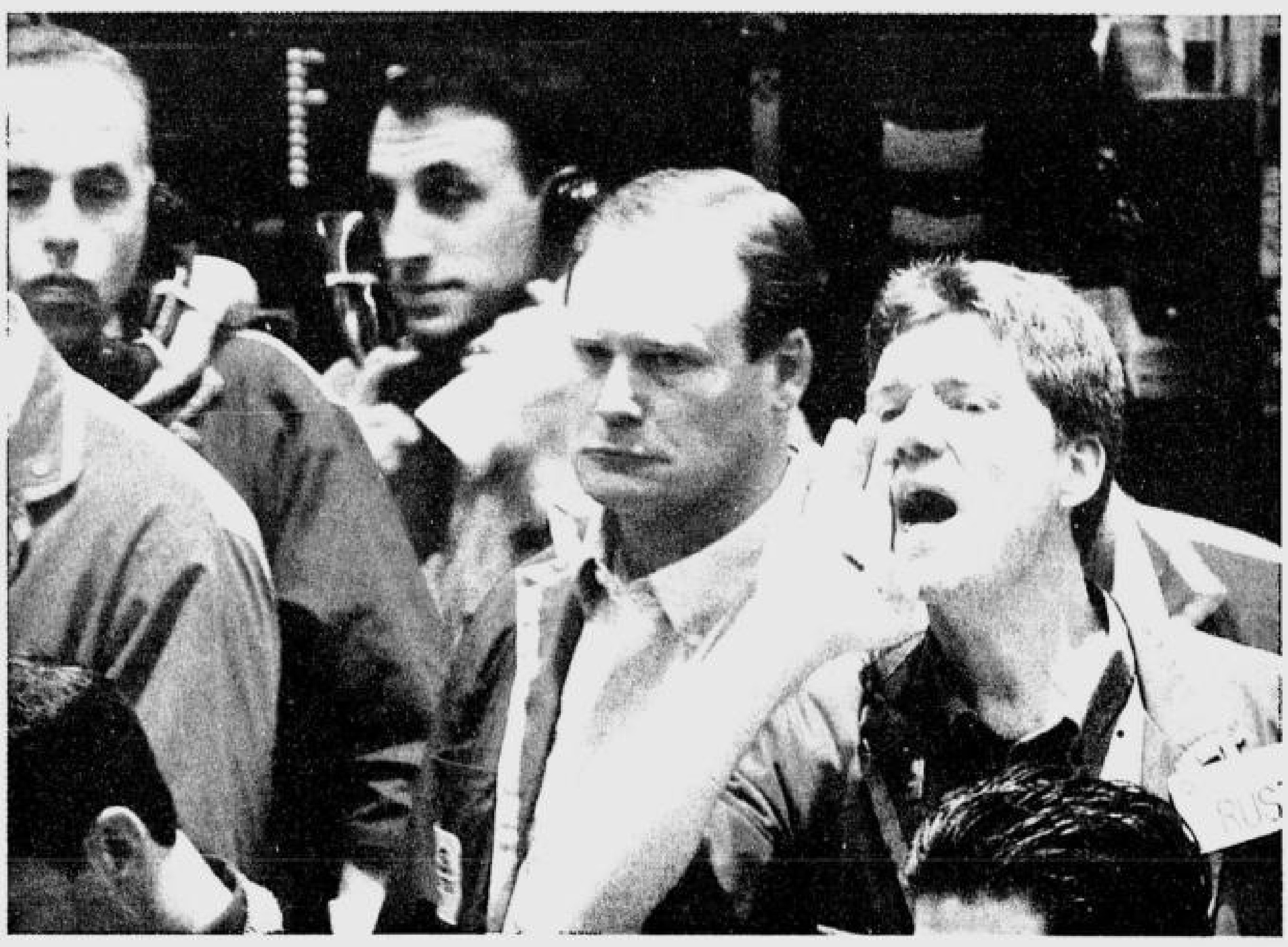
Prime Minister John Howard said the government would be watching the deal closely to ensure it meets foreign ownership restrictions.

"I hope the Qantas we know is the Qantas we keep," he told ABC radio. "People like Qantas, it's an icon; that doesn't meant to say it's shares can't change hands."

The airline, which remains one of the world's most profitable for its size, is subject to a 49 percent ceiling on foreign ownership and a 25 percent limit on any single foreign share holding.

Under the deal, foreign partners in the consortium, called Airline Partners Australia, will hold less than 40 percent with no single foreign investor having more than 15 percent. Qantas is currently 46 percent foreign owned.

The buyers vowed to maintain Qantas's immaculate safety record, push ahead with an investment in 70 new aircraft over the next five years to increase capacity by 40 percent, expand its overseas services and maintain its domestic routes and those of Qantas affiliate Jetstar. *AFP*



TRADERS buy and sell crude oil futures contracts at the New York Mercantile Exchange. The market studies mixed signals from OPEC officials about the possibility of production cuts. AP

Toshiba gets out of music, sells to EMI

TOKYO—ELECTRONICS AND ENERGY giant Toshiba Corp. announced on Thursday plans to sell its entire stake in Japanese label Toshiba EMI to British partner EMI Group, saying that music was no longer relevant to its business.

Toshiba said it would sell its stake for about $179 million and complete the deal by September.

One of Japan's major music and entertainment companies, Toshiba EMI is currently controlled 45 percent by Toshiba and the remaining 55 percent by EMI, the world's third-largest music company based in London.

Toshiba accepted an offer from the EMI Group as "the music content business today is less relevant to other businesses within the Toshiba Group," it said in a statement.

Toshiba EMI primarily handles domestic artists but also sells albums in the lucrative Japanese market of some of EMI's top acts—most famously The Beatles.

Among its domestic artists is Japanese pop diva Hikaru Utada, whose first album "First Love" sold more than 8.6 million copies in Japan and 990,000 overseas, mainly in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Toshiba has been focusing increasingly on its energy operations and in October completed the purchase of US nuclear power plant maker Westinghouse from British Nuclear Fuels for $5.4 billion.

There is growing speculation that Toshiba, which also sold shares in Toshiba Ceramics in October, is now aiming to sell off other group companies such as Toshiba Tec as it focuses on its core electronics and energy interests.

"Toshiba is expected to accelerate this strategy from now on, making it different from its rivals such as Sony, which still regards content as a major pillar," said Koichi Fujimoto, an analyst at Okasan Securities.

Sony, going through a major overhaul of its business, continues to expand both its entertainment operations, such as video games and movies, as well as its consumer electronics operations.

Investors reacted cautiously to Toshiba's announcement with the group's shares closing down one yen or 0.13 percent at 771, while the benchmark Nikkei index rose 0.82 percent.

Toshiba EMI is now under restructuring due to a slump in sales of music software, dropping to fourth place in Japan's music sales ranking in 2005 from second the previous year. *AFP*

Former Enron CEO Skilling off to prison

WASECA, MINNESOTA—FORMER ENRON chief executive Jeffrey Skilling quietly entered prison, the final step in the fall of a man who once presided over one of Wall Street's biggest success stories.

Skilling embraced his wife on Wednesday before walking into the low-security Federal Correctional Institution here to begin his 24-year, four-month sentence for fraud and other crimes in the collapse of the former energy giant.

Barring a successful appeal, and even if he earns time off for good behavior, the 53-year-old Skilling will be an old man at the end of his term.

Skilling and Enron founder Ken Lay were convicted last May on numerous counts of fraud, conspiracy, insider trading and other charges in the collapse of the Houston-based firm, which led to the loss of thousands of jobs, more than $60 billion in company stock and more than $2 billion in employee pension plans.

A federal judge on Tuesday denied Skilling's request to remain free on bond pending his appeal.

Skilling, accompanied by his brother, Mark, and wife, Rebecca Carter, arrived at the prison in a silver Jeep Liberty. The group drove past a crowd of media without stopping, and walked into the prison. Skilling's family members emerged a few minutes later and left.

The low-security prison, which sits on the city limits of this town of 8,400 people, 75 miles (120 kilometers) south of Minneapolis, has a low profile in the federal penal system.

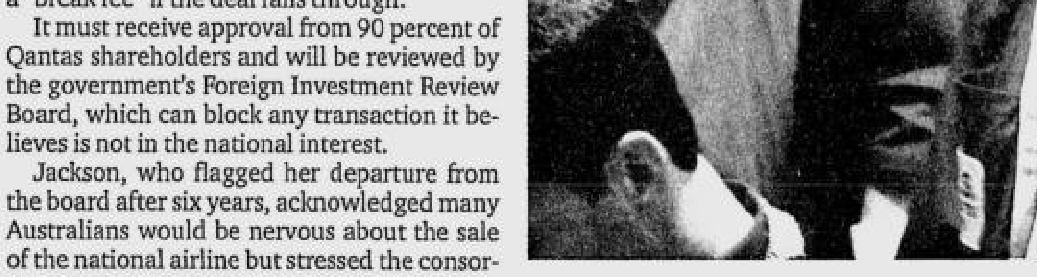
Inmates at the prison have access to exercise facilities including a basketball court, running track and a ping pong table. Like most inmates, Skilling is likely to be required to work in prison labor jobs such as food service, plumbing and painting, where he would earn 12 to 40 cents (9 to 30 euro cents) an hour.

That is a far cry from what Skilling earned at the helm of Enron—more than $151.7 million from 1999 to 2001, the time span of the indictment.

Lay died in July of a heart attack before he could be sentenced, prompting a judge to vacate his conviction.

Lay "probably would have faced a similar fate if he'd been able to stand up for sentencing on the same day as Skilling," said Leslie Caldwell, a former federal prosecutor and one-time chief of the Justice Department's Enron Task Force. *AP*

Nasdaq launches $5.3-B bid to take over London bourse



NASDAQ has formally launched a hostile takeover bid for the London Stock Exchange, setting shareholders a Jan. 11 deadline to accept the offer. AFP

LONDON—THE NASDAQ STOCK Market Inc. formally launched its $5.3-billion takeover bid for the London Stock Exchange Group PLC on Tuesday, slashing the number of acceptances it needs to take the bid unconditional as it targeted shareholders directly.

The LSE board immediately reiterated its earlier rejection of the 1,243 pence $24.26 per share approach and urged shareholders to take no action.

Releasing the formal offer document, Nasdaq cut the level of acceptances needed for the offer to become unconditional from 90 percent to 50 percent plus one share.

The New York-based exchange is under pressure to find a European partner amid trans-Atlantic consolidation—the New York Stock Exchange is close to finalizing a deal with Euronext NV while seven investment banks, including Goldman Sachs and Citigroup, have unveiled plans for a rival European platform of their own to challenge the likes of the LSE.

LSE board rejects $24.26/share offer

Nasdaq already owns 28.75 percent of the LSE after building up its stake gradually this year, but analysts said it was unlikely to win approval for the bid at its current price.

The stock is already well above that level, closing steady at $25.94 on Tuesday.

"The trans-Atlantic deal between NYSE/Euronext has meant that Nasdaq is under pressure to follow suit with another trans-Atlantic maneuver," said David Easthope, an analyst at Boston-based financial research and consulting firm Celent.

"The merger of Nasdaq and LSE is an appropriate pairing, however I don't see how the price of this deal won't rise into the stratosphere," Easthope added.

Nasdaq said it will not improve its offer unless a rival bid is made or it is agreed by the LSE board.

It declined to comment further on the change to the offer, which LSE shareholders have until Jan. 11 to accept.

Nasdaq chief executive Bob Greifeld said the deal represents "full and fair value for LSE shareholders, taking into account the successes of the business but also the new competitive threats which the LSE will face in 2007 and beyond."

However, the LSE board swiftly repeated last month's rejection of the offer, saying it "substantially undervalues the exchange and fails to reflect its unique strategic position and the powerful earnings and operational momentum of the business." The LSE said it would write to shareholders to explain its reasons. *AP*

A POLICEMAN dressed as Santa hands out candies to store clerks at a shopping mall in Manila's financial district of Makati City. REUTERS

LRTA eyes direct power connection from Transco

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (LRTA) has asked National Transmission Corp. (Transco) for direct power connection at a wholesale price, rail administrator Mel Robles said in an interview.

The LRTA initiated negotiations mainly because it wanted to trim power costs, Robles said.

Electricity bills for LRT Line 1 (Monumento to Baclaran) and Line 2 (Recto to Santolan) run to a combined P600 million a year, he said.

Robles said a direct connection to Transco would also ensure stable power supply during emergencies.

The LRTA is also considering tying up with independent power producers for supplementary power on a pay-per-use scheme.

Under this set-up, LRTA would maintain its regular connection with Manila Electric Co. but will be able to switch to power from independent producers if needed.

Another option being considered is to generate its own power.

"At the moment the most viable scheme seems to be a direct connection to Transco," Robles said.

"Transco is very receptive and we might know next year whether we can push through with this arrangement."

Despite higher revenues and government subsidy, the LRTA suffered ballooning losses due to surging power costs.

The rail authority posted P1.184 billion in net revenues from January to September this year but power expenses ate up revenues.

LRTA's power bill reached more than P345 million as of September—P214 million for Line 1 and P130 million for Line 2.

The power bill rose from P303 million for both lines during the same period last year. More than P188 million was paid for Line 1 and about P115 million for Line 2.

Subsidies reached only P32.812 million as of Sept. 30 this year, resulting in a net loss of P187 million for Line 1 and P709 million for Line 2.

RP sells raw sugar to US

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINES SUCCESSFULLY shipped out 50,000 metric tons of raw sugar to the United States as part of Washington's efforts to stabilize supply in the wake of hurricanes that devastated the sugar-producing states.

Ma. Victoria Magcase, vice president of state-run Philippine International Trading Corp., said the cargo was sent out in exchange for 49,971 MT of American refined sugar brought in tax-free under a swap program between Washington and Manila.

The exchange was made through Memorandum Order No. 206 which Malacañang issued last Feb. 23.

Magcase said the swap was made last September, through eight local farms accredited by the Sugar Regulatory Authority.

"PITC is the agency that implements the sugar swap program in consultation with the SRA and the domestic sugar industry," she explained.

Tasked to facilitate the government's countertrade services, PITC earned P10 million from the deal by charging a P10 service fee on each bag of sugar shipped to the United States.

Magcase said domestic supply would not be adversely affected since the outbound sugar was replaced with roughly the same volume of refined sugar.

The United States had increased Philippine quota by 80,000 MT to a total of 216,438 MT but SRA's rules focused on the raw sugar shipments.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita had hurt reduced American sugar production, prompting an increase in quotas for import sources like the Philippines, which in this case is by way of preferential or above-market rates.

The SRA had expressed confidence that through a properly implemented swap program, exporters would be able to ship out this year at least 200,000 MT.

RP seen . . .

From page B16

and thriving domestic consumption and demand for exports—was in the middle of the pack, ahead of Thailand's 4.9 percent and Indonesia's 5.2 percent, and trailing Malaysia's 5.7 percent and Vietnam's 8.2 percent.

The picture remains roughly the same in 2007 when the country places ahead of Thailand's 4.9 percent and Malaysia's 5.2 percent and tails Indonesia's 5.8 percent and Vietnam's 8.4 percent.

In terms of inflation, the Philippines is also on middle ground as the numbers improve to 5.7 percent and 5.3 percent this year and the next from the 6.2 percent posted in 2005.

IDE-Jetro said private consumption, which accounted for 80 percent of total income (GDP) in 2005 was better in 2006 partly due to rising farm household income and to a sustained increase in remittances from migrant workers.

Also, exports continued to be a growth driver for the country as figures increased by as much as 16.4 percent in the nine months to September.

However, export growth would be dampened in 2007 as demand from major importing markets slide amid a slowdown in their own growth.

Next year, remittances from OFWs are expected to increase further, leading to the growth of private consumption by 4.9 percent while government consumption is expected to increase by 4 percent amid continuing efforts at fiscal rehabilitation.

"It is highly likely that the government will implement an economic stimulus package centered on large-scale public works projects, including transportation infrastructure, and that interest rates will be cut during 2007 given the stable performance of both the exchange rate and the consumer price index," the report said.

"Thus, investment in both the government and private sectors will bounce back, after having been on the decrease for two years in a row since 2005," it added. "Consequently, total investment, which registered a net decrease of 1.8 percent in 2006, is forecast to return to a positive growth rate of 3.3 percent (in 2007).

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• FLORAL PARADE 27 JAN 2007 PERSIARAN PERDANA, PUTRAJAYA • FLOAT DISPLAY 27 - 29 JAN 2007 PERSIARAN PERDANA, PUTRAJAYA
• FLORAL BAZAAR 27 JAN - 1 FEB 2007 PERSIARAN PERDANA, PUTRAJAYA • FLORAL DECORATION COMPETITION 27 JAN - 4 FEB 2007 SHOPPING COMPLEXES & HOTELS NATIONWIDE
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People, Events & Products

Traditional Noche Buena feast at the Julius Maggi Kitchen

IN CELEBRATION OF TRADITIONAL holiday dishes passed on from one generation to another, the Julius Maggi Kitchen (JMK) is offering a series of cooking demos for Nestlé Club members on Heritage Christmas Cooking this December. JMK's featured chef will give well-loved recipes for Noche Buena and cooking tips to create Pastel with a delicious crust, perfectly roasted turkey with juicy meat, and melts-in-your mouth leche flan. Attend this activity and get to share your family's secret methods and tricks in making these dishes more special.

In tune with the cooking demo, the Nestlé Club is also offering a lifestyle lecture on Homemade Holiday Ham where a lecturer from Nestlé Cabuyao will share her delicious recipe and do a step-by-step demonstration. Start a business selling holiday hams or serve it with quezo de bola, Spanish hot chocolate and crusty pandesal for your family.

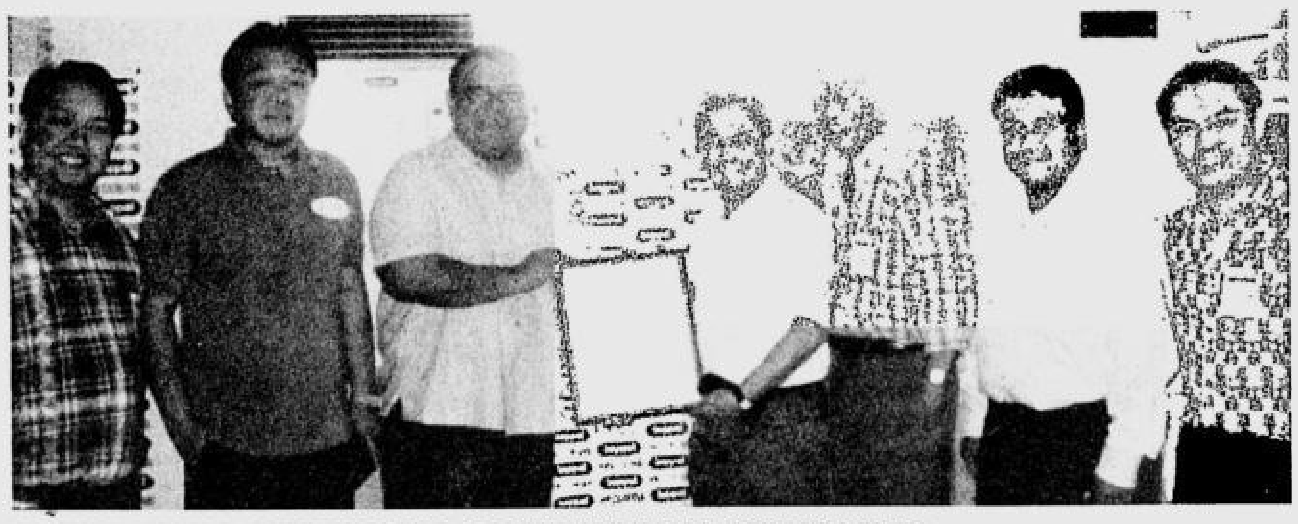
The Julius Maggi Kitchen continues to offer raffles and promos for Nestlé Club members! Be the first to arrive with the most number of friends who are not yet members and win exciting prizes in the Member-Get-Member (MGM) Promo. All members may also join the Lucky Member Raffle. An activity exclusive for current Nestlé Club members, My Best Nestlé Recipe lets you share your very own specialty recipe using any Nestlé product/s for a chance to present it in the next cooking demo! Submit your entries complete with your name, address, contact numbers, e-mail, and photo to Nestlé Consumer Services via email at Consumer.Services@ph.nestle.com, fax at 897-0987, or hand mail to Consumer Services, Nestlé Center, 31 Plaza Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati City.

A session reserved for current Nestlé Club members will be held on Dec. 16 from 2 to 5 p.m. Make your reservations by calling 727-4137 or 0916-7088013.

For queries on how to become part of the Nestlé Club, call Nestlé Consumer Services at 898-0061 or fax 897-0987. You may also e-mail Consumer.Services@ph.nestle.com, log on to www.nestlerecipes.com.ph or write to PO Box 1163 Makati Central Post Office, 1251 Metro Manila, Philippines.

SECURITY BANK HOLDS 1ST PRESIDENT'S CUP GOLF INVITATIONAL

Security Bank Corp, one of the top private domestic universal banks in the country today, recently held its first ever President's Cup Golf Invitational at the prestigious Orchard Golf and Country Club. Why it took the bank 55 years to organize such an event only SBC president and chief executive officer Alberto S. Villarosa can explain. 'This year's 55th anniversary celebration was the perfect venue to launch the first President's Cup. In line with the anniversary theme, this event is another way to thank our clients for their patronage all these years.' said Villarosa. The well-attended invitational tournament saw the bank's senior management sharing pleasantries on and off the golf course. Among the participants on hand were past SBC president Rafael 'Babes' Simpao, national treasurer Omar Cruz, Philippine Daily Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto, with husband Alex Prieto, Philippine Star columnist Alex Magno, South City Church Pastor Gus Lising, Kingdom Builders president Paul Tanchi and Paramount Life's George Tiu, to name a few.



KOPPEL TURNS OVER UNIT TO ARCHITECTURAL CENTRE CLUB

Koppel recently turned over a 3-tonner floor standing unit to the Architectural Centre Club Inc (Acci). Shown at the formal turnover ceremonies is Michael Dauden, president of Fedders Koppel Inc handing out the certificate to engineer Cesar Punsalan and architect Frankie Flameño Jr of Acci. Also witnessing the ceremonies are, from left, Leo Estallo (sales director, Fedders Koppel Inc), Ronald Lim, Gabby Togado (director for manufacturing and engineering, Fedders Koppel Inc) and Ernie Chavez (VP-finance, Fedders Koppel Inc).

Experience the 'All-New Ranger Built Ford Tough Challenge!'

GET READY FOR THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE THIS month with Ford's no-compromise, powerful American tough truck, right here in the metro.

This coming Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 16 and 17, drive through the toughest terrain with the all-new Ford Ranger at the Mall of Asia SM Bay City. Experience the sterling performance of this latest vehicle offering via a great driving opportunity, and see how the "Can-do Tough Truck" makes any challenge ordinary.

Spice up your weekend with the whole lineup of the all-new Ford Ranger: the 2.5L 4x2 Base manual transmission, 2.5L 4x2 XLT Trekker manual and automatic transmissions, 3.0L 4x4 XLT manual transmission, as well as the 3.0L 4x4 XLT manual transmission, which makes its great debut this weekend.

Similar to its predecessors, the all-new Ford Ranger is marked with the legendary "Built Ford Tough" DNA, featuring best-in-class torque, 4x4 capability, payload and towing, and driving dynamics. Since its introduction in 1998, the Ford Ranger has been, by far, one of the world's most competitive pickup truck offerings. Named "Pickup of the Year" for two consecutive years, the Ford Ranger is continuously lauded by car enthusiasts because of its power-steering capacity, off-road capabilities and unparalleled performance.

Catch the all-new Ford Ranger in the following dealerships: in Metro Manila, Ford dealerships can be found in Alabang, Balintawak, Commonwealth, Edsa, Libis, Makati, Manila, Quezon Avenue and Shaw Boulevard. In the provinces, Ford can be found in Bacolod, Cabanatuan, Cagayan de Oro, Cavite, Cebu, Dagupan, Davao, Iloilo, Pampanga and San Pablo. For more information, call 889-FORD (3673).

MARHS general alumni homecoming

MANUEL A. ROXAS HIGH SCHOOL IS GEARING up for its 59th general alumni homecoming titled "Roxasians-Reliving the Happy Moments Together." On Sunday, Jan. 28, 2007, the MARHS campus will come alive with a variety of fun-filled activities celebrating the pride of Roxasians everywhere. The event will be hosted by Batches '67 and '77. MARSH is located at President Quirino Avenue, Paco, Manila. For more information, call Santy Cruz at 0917-3754950; Milaflor Villegas at 0917-4358075 of Batch '67 and Connie Javier at 0918-3824083, or Ernie Carino at 0919-2653211 of Batch '77.

SBCA grand alumni homecoming

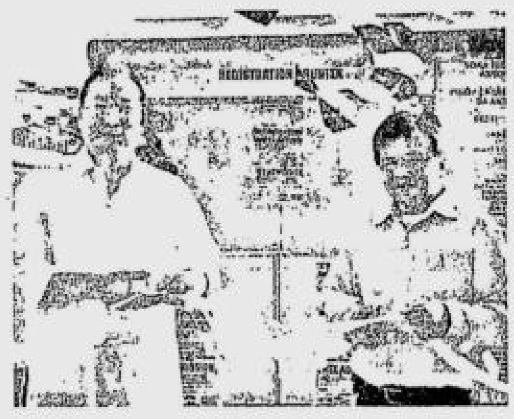
ALL SAN BEDA COLLEGE ALABANG (BENEdictine Abbey School) alumni are invited. The San Beda College Alabang First High School Silver Jubilarians (HS Batch 1981) and the SBCA Alumni Association will have the SBCA Grand Alumni Homecoming named "Sa Bene Come Again, The Grand Silver Alumni Homecoming". The event will be on Dec. 16, 4 p.m:, at the San Beda College Alabang Gym. For more information, call the SBCA Alumni Association Office at 809-1780. Look for Kim Lacanlale or Immie Stevens or log on to www.sanbedaalabang.org.

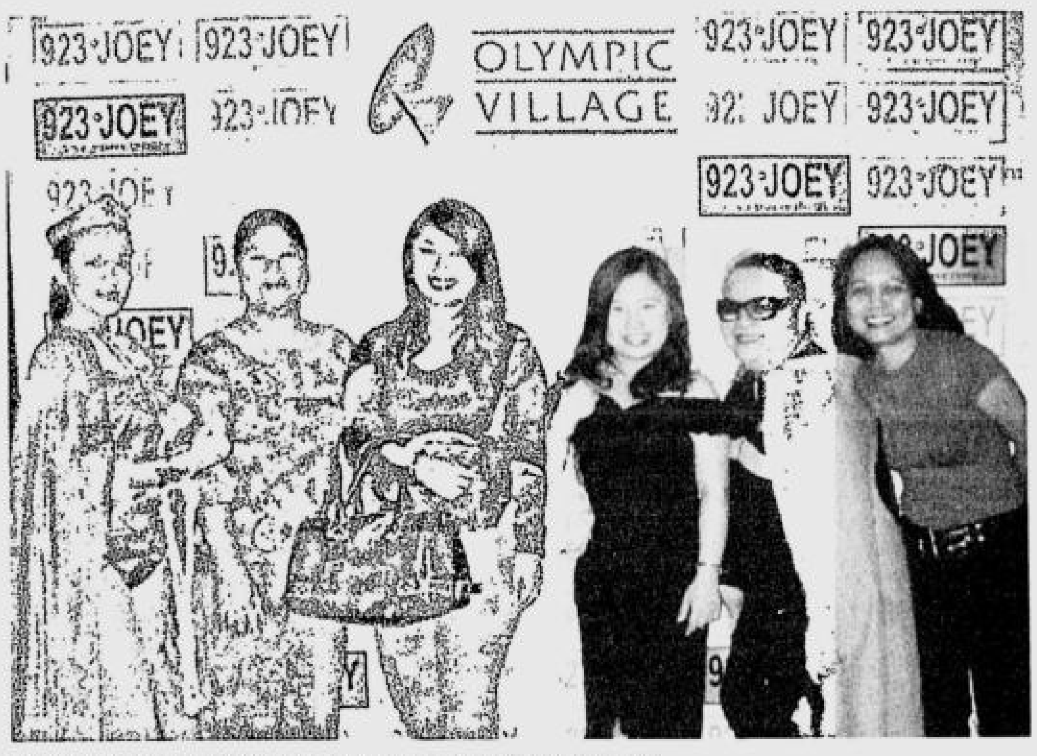
PIOLO PASCUAL JOINS BDO 'ASENSO KABAYAN' LAUNCH

Banco de Oro Universal Bank (BDO) recently held the public launching of its newest program offering for OFWs, the BDO 'Asenso Kabayan' at SM City Fairview. Themed as 'Handog sa mga Overseas Pinoy', the event introduced to the public the features and benefits of the BDO 'Asenso Kabayan' Program which are specifically designed for the OFWs and their beneficiaries. The BDO 'Asenso Kabayan' Program provides 'kababayans' the convenience and ease of access to bank products such as remittance, savings, loans, insurance and other financial services. Piolo Pascual, the official endorser of BDO 'Asenso Kabayan' Program, was present during the formal launch. He sang the program's jingle 'Kahit Saan' and serenaded the audience with songs from his latest album. It was an afternoon of fun and entertainment as the audience participated in the games and limited-edition Piolo Cash Cards were given to winners which Piolo himself had awarded. Selected beneficiaries were also given the chance to talk to their loved ones abroad through live long distance phone patch. BDO 'Asenso Kabayan' products and services are available in all BDO branches. For more information, call BDO Call Center 631-8000; Domestic Toll-Free: 1800-10-6318000; International Toll-Free (IAC): +800-8-6318000; or log on to www.bdo.com.ph.

ENTREPRENEURS EXPO AT ANTIPOLO A SUCCESS

'Pinoy Entrepreneurs@Antipolo', a trade exhibit showcasing the products and services of Pinoy entrepreneurs in the province of Rizal, was a big success! It was organized by Soar High Marketing Associates Co, and held at the Ynares Sports Center Dec. 8 and 9. The place was packed by hundreds of visitors amazed at the business opportunities in Antipolo City. At the ribbon cutting ceremony were Jimmy Siybauco, president of Entrepreneurs Society of the Philippines (left), and Bing Angeles, president and general manager of Soar High Marketing Associates Co.





OLYMPIC VILLAGE JOINS JOEY'S SUPER BASH

Olympic Village, the one-stop interactive sports and fitness lifestyle store, recently joined Joey 92.3's annual Halloween super bash with the theme 'Comics & Superheroes'. Shown are (from left): Joey's PR manager Ria Romero, Olympic Village product supervisor Paula Michelle Ruga, training supervisors Philis Fajardo and Christine Joy Rivero, 92.3 Joey VP Bianne Tupas and NBC VP for operations Gladys Lucas. The Olympic Village Group currently has 21 outlets housing more than 300 brands. The outlets are named accordingly as Olympic World in Alabang Town Center, Olympic Gold in Galleria, Olympic Village, Hall of Fame at Festival Mall and Olympic Outlet.

To HRT or not to HRT

SIMPLY PUT, MENOPAUSE IS THE TIME IN A woman's life when she stops having menstrual periods. During menopause, a woman's hormone production drops below the level required to continue her periods. It therefore changes the rate and patterns of hormone release. The average age for menopause is 51, but it could happen as early as in the late 40s. The official start of menopause is declared when a woman has gone 12 consecutive months without a menstrual period.

With menopause comes its symptoms: hot flashes, fluid retention, night sweats, depression, mood swings, irritability, weight gain, headache, fatigue, and stress, to name a few.

Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) has often been used to treat the symptoms of menopause. By definition, HRT are forms of medication containing one or more female hormones, commonly estrogen plus progestin (synthetic progesterone).

For the past 50 years, HRT has been the accepted standard of care for menopausal symptoms and many other illnesses associated with and following menopause. It should be noted that, unfortunately, HRT was introduced in the pharmacopeia before rigorous evidence of the efficacy and safety of medications were required by the FDA and other regulatory agencies.

According to Ronald C. Hamdy, M.D. F.R.C.P, FACP, doubts about the efficacy of HRT started after the results of the HERS Study (Hulley et al, Jama 1998; 280; 605-613) were published. In fact, the study had to be prematurely terminated because more patients in the estrogen/progesterone group sustained cardiovascular events during the first year of the study than those who were taking placebo. In fact, HRT's role in the treatment of osteoporosis is now questioned.

A study by the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) in 2002 showed that HRT is associated with less benefit and more risks. In short, the overall health risks exceeded the benefits.

Because of this development, health authorities agreed that HRT products should carry precautionary advice; that HRT should be used only for a short period of time, and only for the relief of menopausal symptoms-not for osteoporosis; and that herb-based therapies for relieving menopausal symptoms may be explored.

Recently, an all-natural herbal supplement, Hemofer Liquid Herbal Tonic Supplement, was introduced in the Philippine Market to help give relief to menopausal symptoms. It contains eight herbs that have been used for hundred of years, specifically for women in Chinese traditional medicine.

Hemofer Liquid Herbal Tonic Supplement is manufactured by Pangashou Pharmaceutical Co, Ltd In Guangzhou, China and exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Spring Vine Herbal Trading Corp. It is now available in all Mercury Drugstores, Watsons, Mansons, and other leading drugstores. For further information, text 0915-4208612 or 0927-4347832.

Teaching Aetas how to count

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

CORPORATE CITIZEN

IT'S NOT EASY FOR THE AETA FAMIlies relocated to Bamban, Tarlac to make a living out of selling root crops, fruits, beaded necklaces and handmade bows and arrows along the highway.

Their burden is made even heavier by unscrupulous customers who cheat the Aetas patiently peddling their wares under the heat of the sun out of their hard-earned money.

They take advantage of the fact that most of these Aetas do not know how to count and are not too familiar with the value of paper bills and coins, and the proper weights and measures to guide their sales.

Realizing that it was in a position to help, accounting firm Isla Lipana & Co.-- a member firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers-- partnered with the Management Association of the Philippines, the TOWNs Foundation and Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation Inc. to teach the Aetas how to count and handle money to improve their business.

Isla Lipana chair and senior partner Tammy Lipana told the INQUIRER that by imparting these basic skills, the Aetas would no longer be cheated out of the money they certainly deserve.

Accountants as teachers

Around 50 officers and employees of Isla Lipana went to Bamban in October as part of the "Kalinga Para sa Aeta" project, bringing with them Math flash cards and training materials that are based on the Aeta culture and what they already know about running a business.

Kalinga Para sa Aeta is aligned with the core principle of the country's oldest major accounting firm, which is giving.

Lipana estimated that it took the Aeta adults and children from 67 families just three hours to identify currency, add, subtract, multiply and use weighing scales for their produce, because they were eager to learn these fundamental skills.

Building skills

The volunteers used toy paper bills to help the Aetas distinguish one currency from another.

"There's no better way to celebrate the firm's 84th anniversary than to help transform the lives of our indigenous brothers and sisters," Lipana added.

Lipana said the company was attracted to the Aetas because they are indigenous Filipinos and they are not too far away from Metro Manila, making it easy for the busy accounting firm to travel during the weekends.

"We also thought about teaching math skills because it is a natural extension of what we do. It is our expertise because we are, after all, an accounting firm," Lipana said.

And houses, too

Isla Lipana complemented the Math lessons with the distribution of school supplies, medicine and food and clothing.

The company also donated part of the budget for the anniversary celebration to the construction of four houses in the Aeta village in Tarlac.

Lipana said that with the sense of fulfillment shared by all who participated in the program, she was optimistic that the project would continue, hopefully with a bigger contingent of Isla Lipana volunteers.

There are more Aetas who need all the help they can get.

VOLUNTEERS from Isla Lipana & Co., the country's oldest major accounting firm, took the first step to spell the difference between ignorance and learning. The "Kalinga Para sa Aeta" project taught the Aetas in Bamban, Tarlac how to count and make change. Isla Lipana also donated a cluster of houses to the Aeta village with funds coming from the budget allocated for the firm's 84th anniversary celebration.

HSBC opens branch in Davao

By Doris C. Dumlao

DAVAO CITY—GLOBAL BANKING giants are finally taking notice of Mindanao.

Last Monday, British banking giant HSBC opened a full-service branch in this city.

"It's a region of fascinating diversity and incredible economic potential and I'm only sorry that it took us too long to be here but I promised myself that we would do this before I leave," said HSBC Philippines CEO Warner Manning, whose term ends this year.

During the inauguration of HSBC's 400-square-meter two-story branch here, its sixth in the country, Manning introduced his successor, Mark Watkinson who echoed HSBC's bullish prospects on Southern Philippines.

"If you look at the economy of Mindanao and the growth of Mindanao, and if you also look particularly at Davao, it's very impressive," Watkinson said.

"The economic growth here is very attractive to us. There's trading, there's real wealth. We think we can serve the community well, introduce business overseas and help Davao business, if they want to trade overseas as well," he said.

Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, who graced HSBC's branch opening, hopes the favorable momentum would continue.

"Whether we like it or not, we're part of Mindanao. I'm sure you've heard how troubled the land is, but we're working hard for an agreement that will provide lasting peace," Duterte said.

"But if it's an indicator, Davao is a safe place. It's an investment city for Mindanao. We have so many things to offer and there are moneyed people in the city to make your bank grow and grow," Duterte said.

Rodolfo del Rosario, presidential adviser for new government centers and a former provincial governor here, said that other multinational corporations would likely take their cue from HSBC's entry.

US banking giant Citigroup has also set foot in Mindanao earlier via its thrift bank subsidiary Citibank Savings which anchored in two cities, Davao and Cagayan de Oro.

25-40% of NCR employers ...

From page B4

cipal amount in cash so its employees could collect their benefits.

"If they don't pay on time, the penalty is 3 percent a month or 36 percent a year," she said.

Companies are also allowed to pay in installment for as long as five years. Businesses in distress are likewise permitted to reduce their payments temporarily and then jack up their remittances once they have recovered, for as long as they issue postdated checks to cover the depressed period.

"We don't encourage dacion en pago as the results are usually not good. The process is too long because we have to visit the property and appraise it. And when we get the property, they get credit for only 70 percent of the appraised value while we incur administrative costs," Ortega said.

There are also companies that religiously remit their contributions but they end of in the delinquent payers' list because, in their haste to comply, they end up reporting wrong SSS numbers and wrong names of employees.

"If correct payments are posted, maybe the delinquency ratio can now be as low as 15-25 percent," Ortega said.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE
Friday, December 15, 2006

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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Nickelodeon				PBA				Big News	PBA					Sentro	Real Stories		Aray-Aray Premyo Sa Rasbo	Letty La Mas Fea
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Inocente De Ti	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Bet The Vandal Buster	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo (8:15 PM)		Maalaala Mo Kaya			Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		Alias (Season V)		Lost (Season II)		Fear Factor (Season V)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		The 4400		Ultimate Guinness World Records	E Buzz	Hollow Man				Bram Stoker's Dracula	
bTV		TV Shopping		NBA: Spurs @ Hornets					NBA Home Video: New York's Game		B-ballography: M. Johnson	OverTime: Larry Bird	FIBA World Basketball	NBA Sola: Below the Rim	NBA: Spurs @ Hornets				
Cartoon Network																	Aqua Teen Hunger Force		
Cinema One		Muslim Magnum .357				May Minamahal				Sidhi				Minsan Pa Kahit Konting Pagtingin 2				Sotera	
Cinemax	What Ever Happened To Baby Jane?					A Cry In The Dark (4:50 PM)				Catwoman				Escape From Alcatraz				The Stepford Wives (2004)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		The Closer		Law and Order: Special Victims Unit + 24		Profiler		City Confidential		Law and Order		Law and Order: Special Victims Unit + 24		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Without A Trace		The Unit	
Discovery Channel	Connect	Extreme Machines		Power Zone		How Do They Do It	Mean Machines	Beyond Tomorrow		Rides		American Chopper		How Do They Do It	Mean Machines	Science of Star Wars		Crime Scene Psychics	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Unlikable Bunny	Shuriken School	Lilo & Stitch	Power Hour		Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Emperor's New School	America's Funniest Home Video	Buzz On Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN			IBF World Grand Prix - Holland			Women's Pro Boards '06		LPGA Golf Longs Drug Challenge 1st Rd.				Golf Programming	English Premier League Preview	Sportscenter Asia		NFL's Greatest Moments	Classic Boxing: F. Patterson V Johansson		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		Veronica Mars Season 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Everwood Season 2		Beach Girls		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (DeGeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Trading Spouses		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
Fox News		Hannity & Colmes		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Makita Ka Lang Muli	Now and Forever	Into The Sun		Dragonball Z	Ghost Fighter	Jewel In The Palace		24 Oras	Captain Barbell	Atlantika (7:45 PM)		Bakekang	A Rosy Life (9:15 PM)		Bubble Gang		Saksi	
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Just Cause		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Dinotopia		Midsomer Murders: Sins of Commission				Regenesis	
HBO	American Pie: Band Camp			A Very Married Christmas			Samantha: An American Girl Holiday			After The Sunset			The Big Preview: Deja Vu	Coach Carter				Suspect Zero (11:15 PM)	
Hero TV	Di-Gata Defenders	Sunny Pig	Inuyasha III	Mirmo de Pon	Saiyuki Reload	Naruto	Monkey Turn	Gundam Seed Destiny	Full Metal Panic	Galaxy Angels	Voltes V Evolution	Inuyasha III	Mirmo de Pon	Astroboy	Three-Eyed One	Naruto	Raijin-Oh	Di-Gata Defenders	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	New Life Shopping Network		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arms	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Karera Sports TV	
JackTV		Back Track				Sweat	X-Play	Heat		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Everybody Hate Chris	Family Guy	American Dad	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Primetime Glick	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Design Remix	30 Minute Meals	Sweet Dreams	Rachel Ray		Smart Solutions	DIY: Jewelry Making	Food 911	Boy Meets Grill	Martha		Clean House		Rachel Ray		Isaac		Simply Wine With Andrea Immer	The Great Adventure
MTV Philippines		MTV Hits	VH1 Fabulous Life London		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV Hits			Get Spotted	MTV Hits	MTV Diyes		Boiling Points	My Own	MTV News	Rockola	VH1 Fabulous Life: World's Most Fabulous Rides	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Club MYX	MYX Versions	Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Secrets Unveiled				Top 5		Nat'l Geographic Specials		WOW!		Top Gun Week		Oasis			
NBN					Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya	Teledyaryo W/ Ray Langit & Angelique Lazo		GSIS Member's Hour		Ting Ng Bayan		Teledyaryo Final Edition		World Pool Championship					
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Pagbubunyag		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles (English)	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Asian Anime Fest: Avatar: The Legend of Aang/ Kappa Mikey		SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Catscratch	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Dark Oracle	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Mga Batang City Jail				Boda De Plata				Mokong Astig At Gamor				Bedtime Stories				Night Job
Qtv	Pawnshop No. 8	Samurai X	Hikaru No Go	The Prince Of Tennis	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle	Ganda Ng Lola Ko		News On Q	Love Life		Irene	Extranatural
RPN 9	TV Shopping	Mundo	Popeye & Son	Chinese Movie	Mr. Fighting	RPN Aksyon Balita		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	NCIS		CSI: Miami		Without A Trace		Newswatch Now	TV Greats On Friday		
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Kaalaman		Shepherd's Voice		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports	Golf Today									Sagupaan				Sportsdesk		Asian Games Closing Ceremonies			
Star Movies		The Rocketeer (3:10 PM)				Ed Wood				Home Alone 3 (7:10 PM)				Jurassic Park				King Arthur (11:10 PM)	
Star World	Two And A Half Men	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Desire: Table For Three		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	TNA Wrestling		Third Watch		Desire: Table For Three		Seinfeld	Walker Texas Ranger
Studio 23		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXilog	Superman The Animated Series	Justice League Unlimited	Wazzup Wazzup	7th Heaven	Charmed (8:15 PM)		Ghost Whisperer (9:15 PM)		News Central	Crash (10:45 PM)		MYXilog
UniTV				KNC Show	Kakampi Mo Ang Batas		Kaka at Claire Kaagapay Nyo		Public Hearing	Make My Day		Ang Dating Daan (8:15 PM)							

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Department of Energy 15th Anniversary

Malampaya: Ka-akibat ng Bayan sa Kaunlaran.

Sa pagdaloy ng enerhiyang dulot ng natural gas, progreso ay nakakamit ng bayan ka-akibat ang Malampaya. At sa aming mga ka-akibat sa Palawan, Oriental Mindoro at Batangas, sa pamamagitan ng pagkakaisa ay nakakamit ang tulong sa kalikasan, kalusugan at kabuhayan ng mga mamamayan upang makamtan ang hinahangad na kaunlaran.

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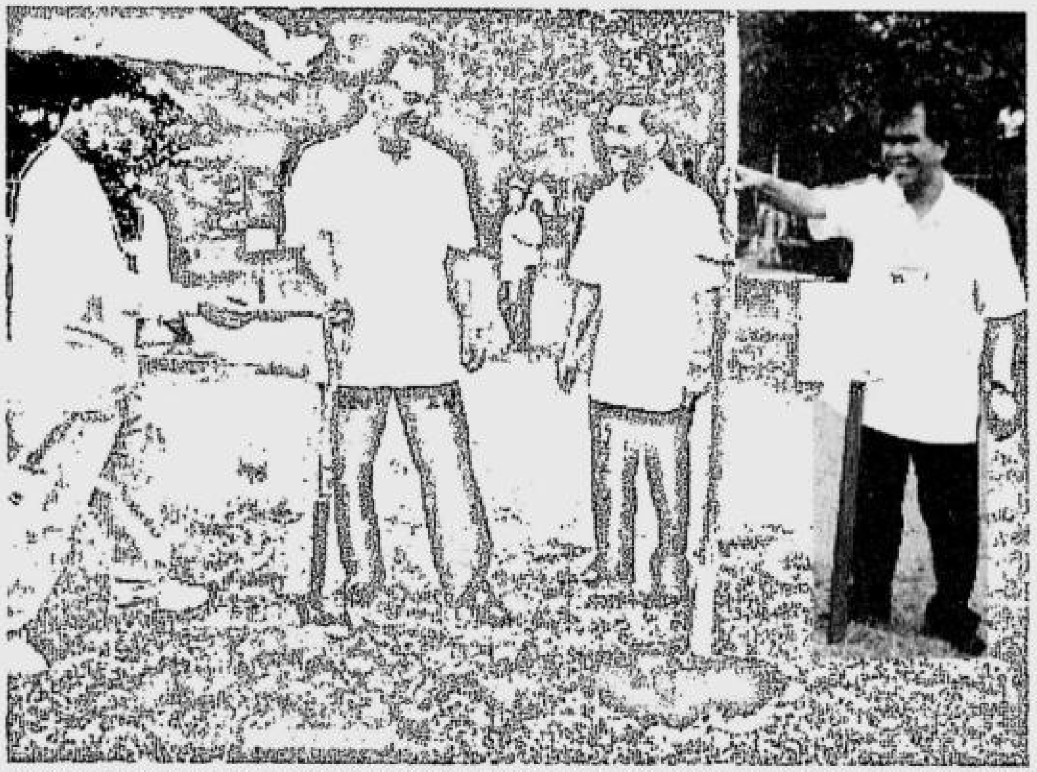
Energizing the economy

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (DOE) celebrates is 15th anniversary today, December 15, with increased optimism on the results of the energy sector's performance in the first year of implementation of the Philippine Energy Plan for 2005-2014, with the attainment of a sustainable 60 percent energy self-sufficiency level by 2010 and beyond and the implementation of reforms in the power sector.

The 60 percent self-sufficiency level by 2010 involves a lot of imperatives.



Energy Secretary Raphael P. M. Lotilla is determined to ensure energy independence for the Philippines in the years ahead. The Secretary (second from right) is shown with National Power President Cyril C. Del Callar (second from left) and other NPC officials during a recent tree-planting activity.

These are:

1. Increase oil and gas reserves by 20 percent in ten years.
2. Reduce coal imports by 20 % in 10 years.
3. Increase renewable energy-based capacity by 100% by 2010.
4. 100% of Metro Manila buses running on compressed natural gas by 2010.
5. 5% CME blend with diesel fuel for vehicles by 2010.
6. 5% ethanol blend with gasoline fuel for vehicles by 2007 to reach 10% in 2010.
7. Convert retired and operating oil-based power plants to natural gas by 2010.
8. 19.9 M MBFOE (2.9 MTOE) to come from annual energy savings in ten years through the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Program.
    - 17.8 MMBFOE (2.6 MTOE) to come from energy efficiency and conservation program.
    - 2.1 MMBFOE (.3 MTOE) to come from alternative fuels for transport program.

The sustained energy strategy includes the various investment requirements in the different energy sub-sectors as well as business opportunities, and the fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to prospective energy investors. For the period 2015-2024, the PEP outlines an agenda highlighting the promotion of alternative energy resource options, emerging clean energy technologies, innovations in energy exploration and development technology, and demand-side management.

Incidentally, the Department of Energy since the early 1970s, has been using barrel-of-fuel-oil-equivalent (BFOE)as a unit of measurement in the Philippine Energy Balance Table. Starting in 2006, it is using ton-of-oil-equivalent (TOE) to conform with internationally accepted standards.

Changes in energy accounting resulted in an improved contribution of geothermal energy by 15 percent, and a decline in the demand for biomass by an average of 14 percent.

Energy independence

Energy independence is part of the five-point reform package identified to spur economic development in the country, the other four others being: Economic growth and job creation, anti-corruption through good government, social justice and basic needs, and education and youth opportunity.

The attainment of an energy self-sufficiency level of 60 percent by 2010 and beyond involves four major components, namely:

- Accelerating the exploration, development and utilization of indigenous energy resources.
- Intensifying renewable energy resource development.
- Increasing the use of alternative fuels.
- Enhancing energy efficiency and conservation program.

The DOE expects an increase of indigenous oil and gas reserves by 20 percent from the 2004 level of 481 million barrels of fuel oil equivalent (MMBFOE), or 69.5 million tons of oil equivalent (MTOE), to 579 MMBFOE (83.6 MTOE) by 2014 through competitive service contracting schemes.

As of 2005, the Philippines had a total of 456 MMBFOE (65.8 MTOE) of petroleum reserves of which around 20 percent was oil and 80 percent natural gas.

In 2004, actual oil production from the Nido and Matinloc fields reached .14 million barrels (MMB) while the production of natural gas from the Malampaya and San Antonio fields totaled 87,556.6 million cubic feet.

ENERGIZING/B13

Projected System Peak Demand Growth
(PDP 2006-2014)

Grid	Ave. Annual Growth Rate	Critical Period
Luzon	4.3%	2010 - 2011
Visayas	6.2%	2008 - 2009
Mindanao	6.4%	2006 - 2007
Philippines	4.8%	

PDP 2006 Update

✓ Projections based on the estimated power supply requirements of the distribution utilities and directly-connected customers of NPC

✓ Critical period may happen later than indicated if the consumers will respond to the government's efforts of promoting demand-side management such as time-of use rates, not only in the generation level but in the distribution level

Globe sponsors 'OFW Family Day'

YOUNG actress Camille Pratts signs autographs after her performance at the 'OFW Family Day' in Lingayen, Pangasinan.

OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) WHO RETURNED home for the holiday season got an early Christmas treat from Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) and Globe Telecom through the "OFW Family Day".

A project of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, the "OFW Family Day" is an annual event where OFWs and their families join together for an entire-day celebration filled with fun, games, gifts, and raffles. All OFWs and their families were invited to participate in the event.

The event kicked off at the SM City Iloilo, Iloilo City Dec. 7 to 9; and at Don Narciso Complex, Lingayen, Pangasinan, and Leyte Capitol Gymnasium, Tacloban City Dec. 9.

There were games for the whole family, including a videoke singing contest. OFWs and family members who bought P60 worth of prepaid credits through AutoloadMAX at the Globe booth were given two free Globe SIM and free IDD or NDD calls.

Aside from Globe, Wow Magic Sing also lent a hand in making the event as lively and as memorable as possible. The Iloilo and Pangasinan events were highlighted by the performances of popular sexy comedienne Ella V and teen star Camille Pratts, respectively.

Further schedules of the "OFW Family Day" celebration are: Dec. 16 at SM City Cagayan de Oro City, SM City Davao, and SM City Cebu City; and Dec. 17 at Enchanted Kingdom, Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

JAV fundraiser set for December 16

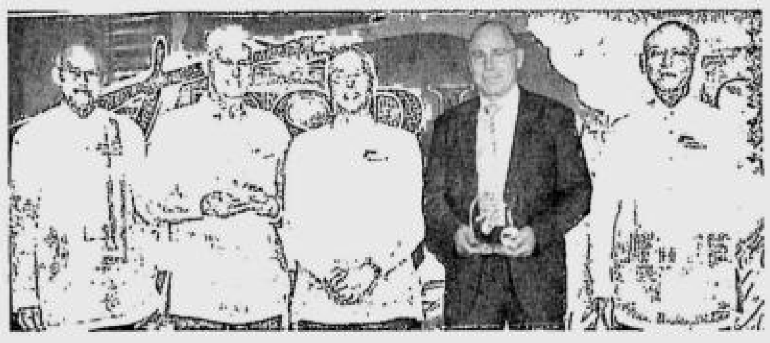
THE 2ND JUNIOR GOLF ASSOCIATION OF Valley (JAV) Golf annual fundraiser is scheduled on Dec. 16 at Valley's Executive course. This annual event aims to raise funds for the continuous development of Valley's junior golfers via participation in the various junior golf events as well as continuous training.

In December 2005, JAV raised a substantial amount of funds that enabled the junior golfers to participate in the Junior Golf summer circuit in 2006. Notably, the JAV fielded a team at the Junior Golf Interclub (at Malarayat) and allowed for the regular monthly junior tournaments at Valley Golf.

For 2007, proceeds will be used for the further development of junior golf. The JAV, despite having been established only in 2004, boasts of a number of world-class players including Bambee de la Paz and Ryan Monsalve. These two youngsters have won major tournaments, Bambee at the Ladies Open held at Canlubang, Ryan has to his credit a runner-up finish at Junior World. It is the thrust of JAV to seek, develop and sustain the competitiveness of the junior golf pool and it is among its goals to further broaden the junior golf base at Valley Golf.

The major sponsors for this tournament are G-Cash (a Globe Telecom Company), Asian Spirit and Wilson Sports. Other sponsors include the Guevent Group of Companies, The Sunny Motors Group and People's General Insurance Corp.

Should you wish to be a sponsor to this fundraising activity, sponsorship kits and tickets are available through Jonathan Lumagbas (jonathan_lumagbas@yahoo.com or 658-4901). Tournament fee is pegged at P1,800 for non-members, P1,200 for members. Junior golfers will only have to pay P500.



MICRO FINANCE PIONEERS
Tulay sa Pagunlad Inc (TSPI), a leading micro finance non-government organization with a loan portfolio of over P530 million, recently marked its 25th anniversary, by recognizing two prime movers in its early years. Founder David Bussau (2nd from left) and first executive director Leigh Coleman (4th from left) were given plaques of appreciation by TSPI officers Rene Cristobal, Ruben de Lara and Lamberto Meer. Unknown to many, the Philippines has become a showcase for its micro finance programs that consist of lending out an average sum of P8,000 to vendors, tricycle drivers and the like. Infused into micro businesses run by the poor, the loans help the marginalized put more food on the table and purchase other necessities. A testimony of its effectivity, TSPI has a repayment rate of 99% proving that the poor are good borrowers. The figure is much higher than the repayment rate of large Philippine banks that lend to affluent individuals.

400 environmentalists, South Koreans to trek Pacific coastline

AFTER THE HISTORIC CONQUEST OF SIERRA Madre mountain range of Aurora Province by their mountaineering division and allied organizations Nov. 14 to 29, Noble Blue Falcons Environmentalists from all over the Philippines and South Korean students will now trek the Pacific coastline of the province to help promote Aurora's tourism potentials and boost environmental awareness.

The adventure, which will run from Dec. 15 to 18, is considered the first and the most challenging involving the Pacific coastline since the Aurora side of the Pacific Ocean boasts of the longest coastline in the country, according to its main organizer the Noble Blue Falcons International Association Inc. (NBFIAI), an international non-governmental association.

Professor Leonardo "Onad" Usita, NBFIAI president, said the coastal hike is exciting in the sense that it is fraught with danger due to huge rocks and imposing cliffs blocking the beaches while providing a serene sanctuary to all resident living creatures.

Usita described the trek as dangerous but exciting due to the presence of marine creatures, corals, and plants and unexplored islands, bays, and peninsulas.

Celebrated author and historian professor Joseph Beatriz Usita claims that the late President Manuel Luis Quezon, a native of Baler, Tayabas (which includes what is now San Luis, Aurora) was so proud and fascinated with this Pacific coast so that in his vacation times while still a student at the University of Santo Tomas Faculty of Civil Law he would bring his classmates from Manila to this coastal town of Baler (including what is now San Luis, Aurora). Furthermore, these coastal barangays of Dibut, Dibayabay, Dikapinisan, and Dimanayat, San Luis, Aurora were also the sites of the fierce battle between the combined Filipino-American forces and the Japanese imperial army in World War II during the liberation of the Philippines and the Pacific.

According to Christoper "Boboy" Usita, Blue Falcons provincial chair in Aurora Province, the conquest of the Pacific coastline is a virtual "journey to the unknown" since no environmentalists from the outside have ever explored the coastal side of Aurora Province.

The participating environmentalists will come from the Blue Falcons Chapters of Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Cagayan Valley, Bicol Region, Central Visayas, and Eastern Mindanao.

Joining them are Environmentalists from Kibbal-Philippines under professor Jonel Quebal, Green Highways under Ervin Friginal, Elite Red Falcons under Appay Bihasa, Usita Advocates under Edu Balingcongan, Aurora-Sierra Madre Blue Mountaineers under Pedie Dukha, Silang Mountaineers under Rudy Vargas, Noble Blue Native Sons under Daniel Jacla, Noble Blue Foresters under Anthony Usita, Green-Philippines under professor Felizardo Colambo, Advocates for servant leadership under Bro. Jonard Nollido, Manoy Boxers under Randy Biron, and South Korean students.

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Energizing the economy

From page B12

By 2012, oil production is targeted to reach 21.3 MMB, while indigenous gas production, 185,023 MMSCF.

The attainment of these targets will depend on the entry of investors and the viability of new oil and gas fields.

Eleven petroleum service contracts were signed in 2005 which would entail initial financial commitments of about US$155 million.

Under the Renewable Energy Policy Framework of 2003, renewable energy-based capacity will increase from its 2002 level of 4,449 megawatts (MW) to 9,147 MW by 2013. A total of 4,698 MW of renewable energy fueled-power plants needs to be installed up to 2013. As of 2005, a total of 721 MW of renewable energy-based capacity has been installed consisting of 695 MW of hydropower, 25 MW of wind power plant and 1 MW of solar power capacity. In 2004, the renewable energy share in the energy supply mix was 122.4 MMBFOE or 17.7 MTOE which represented 43.9 percent of the total energy production.

In its bid to become the leading producer of geothermal energy, the Philippines targets the installation of an additional 1,200 MW within the planning period from the existing capacity of 1,931 MW to 3,131 MW by 2013. In terems of generating capacity, geothermal resources contributed 10,282 gigawatt-hours (GWh) or 18.4 percent of the power supply mix and displaced about 17.7 MMBFOE (2.5 MTOE).

The plan envisions the increase of the overall hydropower available capacity from its current level of 3,219 MW to 3,999 MW by 2014 through the development of all viable small and mini-hydropower plants.

The intensive promotion of biomass, solar and wind energy resources will be continuously carried out to reach an aggregate installed capacity of 548 MW by 2013.

For rural electrification, a total of 8,944 units of solar home systems out of the targeted 15,100 units have already been installed as of December 2005 in Regions I-VII, Cordillera Administrative Region and Mindanao under PNOC's Solar Homes Distribution Project. The project will be completed in 2007.

An initial assessment placed the country's total wind potential at 76,000 MW. In June 2004, the Philippine Wind Investment Kit was launched offering 16 sites for wind power development.

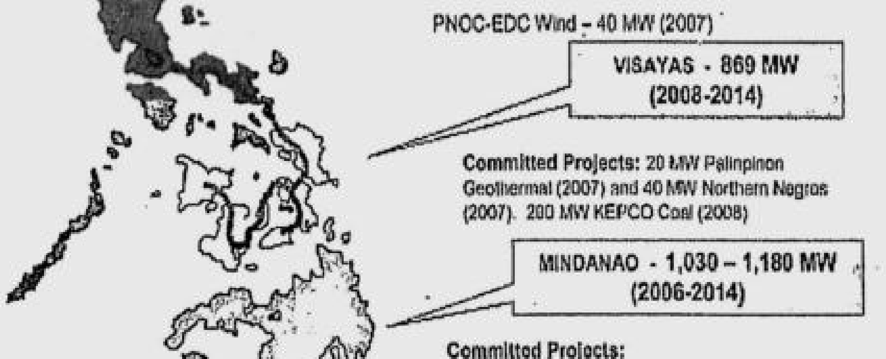
A milestone in wind energy development was the inauguration of the 25-MW Northwind Bangui Bay Wind Power Project in the Ilocos Region in June 2005.

The government will continue to promote the use of alternative fuels and technologies particularly in the transport sector. These cleaner alternatives include biofuels (i. E. coco-biodiesel or coco-methyl ester (CME), fuel ethanol and jatropha curcvas), compressed natural gas (CNG) and autogas.

As an immediate measure against continuously rising oil prices, the Department of Energy will double its efforts to generate nationwide commitment and support to the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Program (NEECP) – the government's framework to promote efficient and judicious utilization of energy - which estimates an aggregate energy savings of 178 MMBFOE (25.7 MTOE) within the planning period.

POWER DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

Investment Opportunities, 2006-2014


LUZON - 1,990 – 2,290 MW
(2010-2014)
Committed Projects:
PNOC-EDC Wind - 40 MW (2007)
VISAYAS - 869 MW
(2008-2014)
Committed Projects: 20 MW Palinpinon Geothermal (2007) and 40 MW Northern Negros (2007). 200 MW KEPCO Coal (2008)
MINDANAO - 1,030 – 1,180 MW
(2006-2014)
Committed Projects:
210 MW Mindanao Coal (Dec. 2006)

Total Additional Capacity Needed - 3,889 – 4,339 MW

Greetings
from
SEMIRARA MINING CORPORATION
(formerly known as Semirara Coal Corporation)
2/F DMCI Plaza
2281 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City, Philippines
Tel. No. (02) 888-3000 Fax: (02) 816-7185
and
PHILCOAL
PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF COAL MINES, INC.
2/F DMCI Plaza
2281 Pasong Tamo Ext., Ext., Makati City, Philippines
Tel. No.: (02) 816-7301 to 10
Fax: (02) 841-0913

Repubiika ng Pilipinas
PANGASIWAAN NG TUBIG AT ALKANTARILYA SA METRO MANILA
Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System
CORPORATE OFFICE
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City 1105, Philippines
Tel: (632) 922-3757 / 922-2969 * Fax (632) 921-2887

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(2nd Invitation)

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project	:	Contract No. MWTP-1
Location	:	MWSS Complex, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Brief Description	:	Supply and delivery of two (2) units Mobile (Trailer-Mounted) Water Treatment Plant
Production Capacity	:	Max. 4,000 liters/hour
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	:	Php 30 Million (Php 15 Million/unit)
Contract Duration	:	150 calendar days
Delivery Period	:	within 150 calendar days

The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR). Only bids from bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
Ground Floor, Engineering Bldg.
MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara
Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the above address upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **P2,500.00** starting **December 19, 2006** in the form of cash or Manager's Check payable to MWSS. Prospective Bidders, who have previously registered with MWSS and bought the Bidding Documents during the first failed bidding, need not buy a new set of Document. However, it shall be required that for the said Bidders to be allowed to bid, they must submit a Letter of Intent to participate in this bidding not later than the date of the Pre-bid conference.

MWSS will hold a **Pre-bid Conference** open to all interested Bidders on **December 28, 2006, 9:30 a.m.** at the Sr. Deputy Administrator's Conference Room.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the above address on or before **2:00 p.m.** on **January 12, 2007**. The official timer for purposes of determining the official time shall be that of the clock located at the conference Room of the Sr. Deputy Administrator. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency.

Form of Security	Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)
2. Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1½%)
3. Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2½%)

Bid opening shall be at **2:30 p.m.** on **January 12, 2007** at the above mentioned address, in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who may choose to attend.

The MWSS reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) **MACRA A. CRUZ**
Sr. Deputy Administrator &
BAC Chairperson

(PDI - Dec. 15 & 22, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
VALENCIA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Valencia City

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The VALENCIA CITY WATER DISTRICT invites interested parties to submit sealed bids for bidding of the following to wit:

Item	Particulars	Quantity	Schedule	
			Pre-qualification	Bidding
Security Guards	8 hrs/shift	19 guards	Dec. 21, 2006 @ 8:30 a.m.	11:00 p.m.

* Bidding price is based on PADPAO Rate

Interested parties may secure checklist of pre-qualification requirements from the BAC Secretariat at Valencia City Water District, Hagkol, Valencia City until December 21, 2006.

The VCWD reserves the right to reject any of all bids without offering any reason, and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to VCWD. The VCWD likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of bids, nor does not guarantees that the awards shall be made.

Prepared by
(Sgd.) **SHELITA M. DEIPARINE**
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

Noted and approved by:
(Sgd.) **RUEL P. PADREQUIL**
General Manager

(PDI – December 9 & 15, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
CORE ALLIANCE INTERACTIVE SOLUTIONS, INC. 2/F Paragon Plaza, 162 Edsa cor. Reliance St., Mandaluyong City	Richard Raymond Steel	Operations Manager
UNREASONING CORPORATION 79 Green World Plaza, BF Homes Parañaque City	Sangwon Kang	General Manager
EB2 INTERNATIONAL INC. 1605 OMM Citra Bldg., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City	John Robin Edginton	Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer
MY PUMPKIN LTD. CO 631 Sto. Cristo St., Binondo Manila	Yingqin Hong	Technical Consultant
TIERA GENERAL CORP. S-11 Marilena Garden, 24 Mariposa St., Bagong Lipunan, Crame, Quezon City	Changhwan Lee	Field Supervisor
JAI SANTOSHI MATA CORPORATION 636 Garcia Bldg., Rizal Ave., Quiapo, Manila	Padma Devi	Finance Manager
LUFTHANSA TECHNICAL TRAINING PHILIPPINES, INC. MacroAsia Special Economic Zone, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City	Holger Beck	General Manager

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Dec. 15, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
DR. JOSE FABELLA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
MANILA

INVITATION TO RE-BID

The Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital invites interested bidders for the re-bid of:

	ABC
MEDICAL LIQUID OQYGEN Including Vacuum Insulated Evaporator (64,615.38 cu. m.)	P 3,360,000.00
MEDICAL GASES	4,318,708.00
LIQUEFIED PETROLEUM GAS (7,000 kgs.)	378,000.00

Bid documents may be secured at the BAC Secretariat Administrative Office. For details, please contact telephone no. 735-7144.

The bids will be opened on **December 22, 2006**, 10:00 a.m. at the DJFMH Reception Hall.

The DJFMH reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality found therein and to accept such bids as may considered advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ELISEA S. MARQUEZ, M.D., D.P.B.A**
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-Dec. 8 & 15. 2006)

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK
P.O. Box 789, 0980 Manila, Philippines
6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, 0401 Philippines
Tel. 632 4231, 632 4306, 632 4444; Fax No. 636 2577
Email: psantiago@adb.org, cjpanganiban@adb.org or cpsoriano@adb.org

INVITATION for PREQUALIFICATION to BID

PROVISION for IN-HOUSE MEDICAL and/or DENTAL SERVICES
(Contract No. ADB/OAS-2006/065)

1. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), a multilateral development finance institution headquartered in Manila, Philippines, invites interested companies to apply for prequalification to bid for the provision for in-house medical and/or dental services. The Contractor, under the supervision of ADB's Medical Doctor, shall provide the following services: (a) operation and maintenance of a medical and/or dental clinic (ADB Medical Center) inside ADB's Headquarters Building, (b) provision of all medical and/or dental requirements of ADB staff, and (c) promotion of health awareness through seminars, workshops, or lectures to be held once a month with prior approval of ADB's Medical Doctor.
2. The application for prequalification may be made for the provision of medical services only, dental services only, or both medical and dental services.
3. Prequalification documents may be obtained from the office of the Head, Procurement & Contracting Unit, Institutional Services Division, Office of Administrative Services, Room 1630S at the above address, from 15 to 22 December 2006 on any working day (from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.).
4. Last day for submission of application for prequalification is 10:00 a.m., 12 January 2007.
5. Only prequalified bidders shall be invited to participate in the bidding exercise to be conducted by ADB. Bid documents will be issued to prequalified bidders from 12 to 16 February 2007.
6. This invitation does not entail any commitment on the part of ADB, either financial or otherwise. Any cost of preparation of prequalification documents shall be borne solely by the applicant. ADB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications for prequalification without incurring any liability or any obligation to inform the affected applicant/s of the grounds for ADB's action.

(Sgd.) CÉCILE L.H.F. GREGORY
Chairperson
Institutional Procurement Committee
Office of Administrative Services

Asian Development Bank ADB
FIGHTING POVERTY IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

(PDI - December 15 & 18, 2006)

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PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Holy Spirit Thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen. Person must pray this 3 consecutive days without stating one's wish. After 3rd day your wish will be granted no matter how difficult it may be. Promise to publish this soon as your favor has been granted. – JPL

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ECOP makes headway in championing for a national population and development policy

THE EMPLOYERS CONFEDERATION of the Philippines (ECOP) has made headway this year in championing for a national policy on population and development.

ECOP Chairman Miguel B. Varela announced that for year 2006 ECOP was able to tap 14 local business organizations and 15 companies nationwide amid its intensified advocacy for a national policy on population and development.

"These business organizations have a blueprint for Population and Development advocacy in their respective areas even as we helped them install Reproductive Health program in their companies," Varela emphasized.

Varela noted that ECOP is in high moral ground in such advocacy, believing that the business sector has a responsibility that is not limited to what the law requires, but beyond those requirements. "We use the principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as our vehicle in implementing these programs," he said.

He highlighted the fact that the Philippine population is one of the "fastest growing in the world" with over 85 million Filipinos today and is continuously growing at an alarming rate of 2.36% annually. "If this trend continues, our country's population will double in 35 years," he warned.

Varela cited that a high population growth results in larger families and repeated pregnancies that lower the participation rate of women in the workforce. The net effect is aggravation of poverty incidence, he added.

According to Varela, nurturing the welfare of the country's human resources will take a long way in clearing the path for the country's development. "Nowadays, the workforce needs not just the protection offered by the employers but more interventions by the State is needed to ensure sustainable human development," he pointed out.

A possible intervention by the State is to address the issues of population, Varela said.

The lack of a sound national population management policy or program has resulted to poor economic and technological development. It has also compromised the nation's ability to increase wealth, compete globally, and to provide for the minimum basic needs of the people, Varela added.

NFA assists Reming victims

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY continues to help the victims of typhoon Reming in the Bicol region and some areas in Southern Tagalog with the release of NFA rice through the various government relief agencies and local government units (LGUs).

According to NFA administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr. the agency's employees have also deemed to celebrate the traditional Christmas parties in the most austere way to be able to donate part of their budget to the typhoon victims.

The agency's rescue team has been assisting in the rescue operations in Bicol since Dec. 1.

Donations, both in cash and in kind, are currently being pooled from the agency's employees nationwide for distribution to the affected provinces.

Tan cited that aside from the issuance of NFA rice for relief operations, the NFA also coordinates with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for the release and distribution of the 5,934 bags of 30 kilograms or 178 metric tons of rice donated by the government of Japan. This is through the facility of the East Asia Emergency Rice Rescue (EARR) program.

The agency's operation center in its Central office in Quezon City is open 24 hours a day to address the requirements of the relief operations in the affected provinces.

For more information on rice relief assistance, the public may send their inquiries via the Text NFA Program with mobile number 0917-6210927.

NFA assures sufficient rice supply in Region 5 despite damage to own stocks

NATIONAL FOO D AUTHORITY administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr. gives the assurance the NFA has sufficient supply of rice in Region 5 for distribution and food security in spite the damage wrought by Typhoon Reming to the agency's own stocks particularly in the provinces of Camarines Sur, Albay and Catanduanes.

The NFA, Tan noted, has always maintained a safe volume of rice inventory for Region 5, currently placed at 494,014 bags sufficient to last for 72 days based on the agency's average regional daily rice sales.

This means the NFA's rice inventory in Region 5 is sufficient to address any possible upsurge in demand for the staple and enough to sustain relief operations in the region.

Tan said initial reports show that some 40,000 bags of rice had been damaged inside warehouses in the Bicol region whose roofs were blown off by the supertyphoon. Despite this, the agency has already issued a total of 86,095 bags of rice for relief assistance in regions 4 and 5.

To further augment supply in Region 5, the NFA's National Capital Region office has allocated a total of 200,000 bags of rice for the typhoon affected areas in regions 4 and 5. The NFA has already started augmenting the rice supply in both regions last week.

The NFA chief at the same time clarifies the alleged refusal of the agency to release the damaged rice for typhoon victims saying the agency manintains the policy that only good quality rice will be released from its warehouses and distributed to the markets or reflief agencies. "Our foremost consideration is ensuring that our stocks will be fit for consumption even by typhoon victims," Tan said.

He added that since the rice is government property placed in trust of accountable officers, protection should also be afforded to the agency's personnel managing the stocks. The same stocks are covered by insurance from the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), thus it will have to undergo full documentation for insurance claims, he explained.

For more information on the NFA's rice relief assistance, the public may send their inquiries via Text NFA Program with mobile number 0917-6210927.

Lt. Col. FELIZARDO V. SEBASTIAN

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on December 13, 2006.

He is survived by his wife, **Maring**; children: **Angel** and **Vita**, **Lydia** and **Cesar Dacutanan**, **Cora** and **Ted Zabala**, **Jun**, **Oscar**, **Rey** and **Carol**; grandchildren and great grandchildren.

His body lies in state at the family residence at 197 Pasolo St., Valenzuela City.

Mass at 3:00 p.m. at the San Diego de Alcala Parish, interment to follow at the Polo Catholic Cemetery.

In loving memory
On his FIFTH DEATH ANNIVERSARY

MENELIO B. SAMSON

July 22, 1935 – December 15, 2001
Camalig, Albay

His loving wife Lydia, child Meldy & son-in-law Jack, grandchildren Biggs, Alodia, Lynelle, request friends, relatives, and all those whose lives he may have touched, to join them in prayers for his eternal peace and happiness with our Lord. Special masses will be offered for his intention.

The Directors, Officers and Staff of the
Philippine Microenterprise Development Foundation
and its partner organization,
Enterprise Mentors International of
St. Louis, Missouri

convey their deepest condolences on
the passing away of its Chairman of the Board

Engr. Romulo M. del Rosario

on December 12, 2006

and request the reader to pray
with them for the eternal repose
of his soul and for the consolation
of his bereaved family.

Always caring...
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MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

ESTRELLA FRANCISCO DE JESUS

of Daet, Camarines Norte

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on November 5, 2006.

wish to express our deepest gratitude
and sincere appreciation to all who offered Masses
and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy
and comforted us in our days of bereavement.

"Rejoice, o highly favored, the Lord is with you."
Luke 1:28

SR. MARY MAGDALEN de PAZZI BRILLANTES, RGS

(Eusebia Amalia A. Brillantes)

On 13 December 2006, Sister Magdalen peacefully ended her 87 years on earth to meet her Shepherd God, after serving Him faithfully for 49 years in religion.

The Philippine Province of the Good Shepherd Sisters and her family request your prayerful remembrance.

The wake is held at the Good Shepherd Provincialate, 1043 Aurora Blvd., 1108 Quezon City. The Mass of the Resurrection will be offered on the 16th December 2006, at 9:00 a.m. Interment at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His onlybegotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

DR. CHARITO DE LOS ANGELES

Has peacefully joined her Creator
after receiving the last sacraments.

Her loving mother **Gloria**; her brothers and sisters-in-law: **Dindo** and **Bliss**, **Toti** and **Marilen**, **Tony** and **Bong**; her nephews and nieces: **Dino** and **Chumby**, **Tito** and **Rica**, **Malou** and **Louie**, **Jaime**, **Martin** and **Celine**, and her grandchildren request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

The wake is at Mt. Carmel Chapel, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine, New Manila, Quezon City. Interment will be at the family cemetery, San Mateo Rizal on Sunday, December 17, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the site of the wake.

(In lieu of flowers, kindly make a donation to the
St. John the Baptist Educational and Scholarship Foundation, Inc.)

Mary Lorenzo Go

March 8, 1921 – December 13, 2006

peacefully joined the Lord on December 13, 2006.

Loving wife of **Mariano Go** (†); children: **Margarita & Luis Uy**, **Annie Go**, **Elsie & Patrick Ng**, **Virginia & Eddie Lim** and **Melchor** (†) & **Conchita Go**; grandchildren: **Michael & Charlene**, **Steve & Sherill**. **Gigi**, **Cheryl**, **Jerome & Riza**, **Erwin**, **Genevieve**, **Earle**, **Gail**, **Marvin**, and **Melanie**; great grandchildren: **Sam**, **Spencer**, **Luis** and **Shamira**.

Her family request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Mass will be celebrated at the Capilla del Señor, Santuario de San Antonio Parish, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City, on Sunday, December 17, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. After which her cremains will be laid to rest in the Santuario Crypt.

Our Beloved Father

ZOSIMO ORTIZ LEDESMA

Now rests in peace in the infinite warmth
and embrace of our Lord.

He joined our Creator on the
12th of December 2006 at the age of 78.

His loving wife **Milagros**; children **Bess & Boy**, **Tony & Nancy**, **Baby & Boyet**, **Leanie**, **Marissa**, **Winnie & Roy**; grandchildren, all his relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc., Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on December 17, 2006, Sunday at the Holy Cross Memorial Park, Tandang Sora, Novaliches, Quezon City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

People, Events & Products

Mekeni VP denies involvement in meat smuggling

ADRIAN S. GARCIA, VICE PRESIDENT of physical structures and engineering of Mekeni Food Corp based in Porac, Pampanga, has denied involvement in an alleged pork smuggling activity in Mexico, Pampanga.

Garcia e-mailed to the Inquirer a reaction to a news item that appeared Dec. 9 in this paper's People, Events and Products section. In the news item supplied by a public relations practitioner, the Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (PNP-CIDG) raided the Kayabe Ice Plant and Cold Storage in Mexico, Pampanga Nov. 28, which allegedly yielded 62,000 kilos of meat shipments smuggled from China amounting to P12 million.

The article also named Alan David and Adrian Garcia as the owners of the storage facility.

"The (accusation) is entirely false," Garcia wrote in his e-mail.

Garcia also took exception to a paragraph in the news item that stated "Inside the cold storage, the operatives met with (David and Garcia) without allowing other people to get in."

"As a matter of fact, Kayabe owner Alan David requested all lessees of the facility to proceed to the storage area on Nov. 28 to witness the police operations that day. Only representatives from Roel's Food Corp, Pampanga's Best Inc, and Mekeni Food Corp came. I represented Mekeni Food Corp. David met briefly with the lessees-representatives and the police operatives, and left thereafter. I also saw representatives of the Bureau of Animal Industry and Department of Agriculture-National Meat Inspection Service that time. It is in this sense that the 'four-hour closed-door meeting between the supposed investigators and owners of the meat plant' never happened," Garcia countered.

The news item also stated that Garcia used the name "Polintan" as an alias. "For the record, I have never used 'Polintan' or any other alias in my business deals," he added.

"As a professional, my transactions have always been upright and beyond reproach."

ROYAL BELGIAN EMBASSY CELEBRATES KING'S DAY

The Royal Belgian Embassy celebrated King's Day at the residence of the Ambassador on Ipil Road, South Forbes Park, Makati City, Nov. 20. The celebration was attended by the members of the diplomatic corps, government officials, media and friends of the embassy. Shown are, from left, Madame Martine Vardakis, lawyer Ruby Ruiz Bruno, Nileema K. Noble, Resident Representative, United Nations Department Programme, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Angeles 'Toto' Santocildes, His Excellency Gregoire Vardakis, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Royal Belgian Embassy, and Veronica B. Jimenez, RTVM Malacanang.

PCE launches opportunities for OFWs

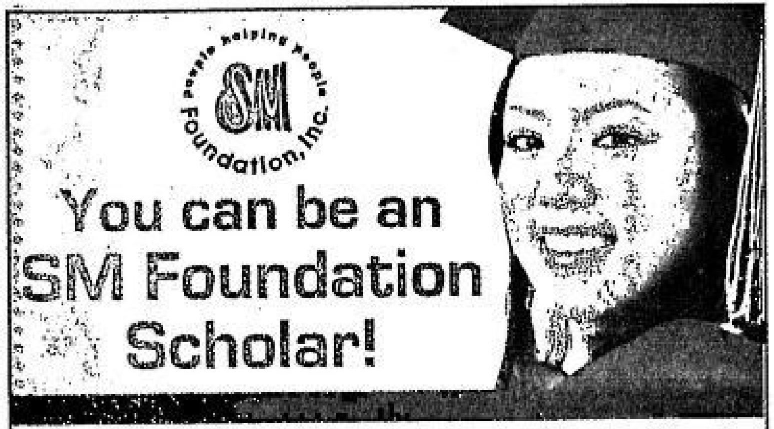
Life after working abroad has always been a blur for overseas Filipino workers. After returning to the country, OFWs are faced with the indecision of leveling with the quality of life in the Philippines-can their savings make it to their and their family's survival? Now, OFWs can put to rest such uncertainties of losing their hard-earned money once they get back home.

This development is owed to the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) as it pushes through with the latest leg of its GoNegosyo advocacy for the year tagged "Go Negosyo Para sa mga OFWs at Balikbayans" slated Dec. 15 to 17 at Market! Market! Trade Halls A & B in Taguig.

"Go Negosyo Para sa mga OFWs at Balikbayans" aims to complement the happiness of OFWs getting reunited with their families by exposing business opportunities to help them carry on with their gleanings. The three-day fair, which is open to the public, will showcase forums to equip OFWs in starting their own businesses and to train them for the continuity of their outputs.

For more information, call the PCE Secretariat at 637-9347 or 637-9229 loc. 7187, or e-mail gonegosyo@yahoo.com.

BUSINESS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Graduating students of public high schools in the National Capital Region (NCR), Baguio, Batangas, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, Lucena, Pampanga, Bacolod, Cebu, Cagayan de Oro, Davao and Iloilo may apply for the SM College Scholarship program. Those with a weighted average of at least 88% by the second or third graduating period with a total household income of at most P150,000 are qualified.

Don't miss this opportunity to attend college! Applications for school year 2007-2008 are accepted until December 20, 2006.

Application forms may be obtained at the
Customer Service Counters of all SM Department Stores branches.
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RP seen growing 5.5% in '06

IDE-Jetro points to surge in exports, private consumption

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY IS estimated to grow 5.5 percent this year due to "outstanding" exports and private consumption.

The Institute of Developing Economies, a part of the Japan External Trade Organization, added in its report titled "2007 Economic Outlook for East Asia" that the Philippines would grow by a "stable" 5.3 percent in 2007 as demand from advanced economies slide.

IDE-Jetro said the country's expected performance was in step with the region's 7.9-percent growth this year and 7.4 percent next year.

The study covers 10 East Asian economies, excluding Japan but including China, the four Asian newly industrializing economies (Hong Kong, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan) and five members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

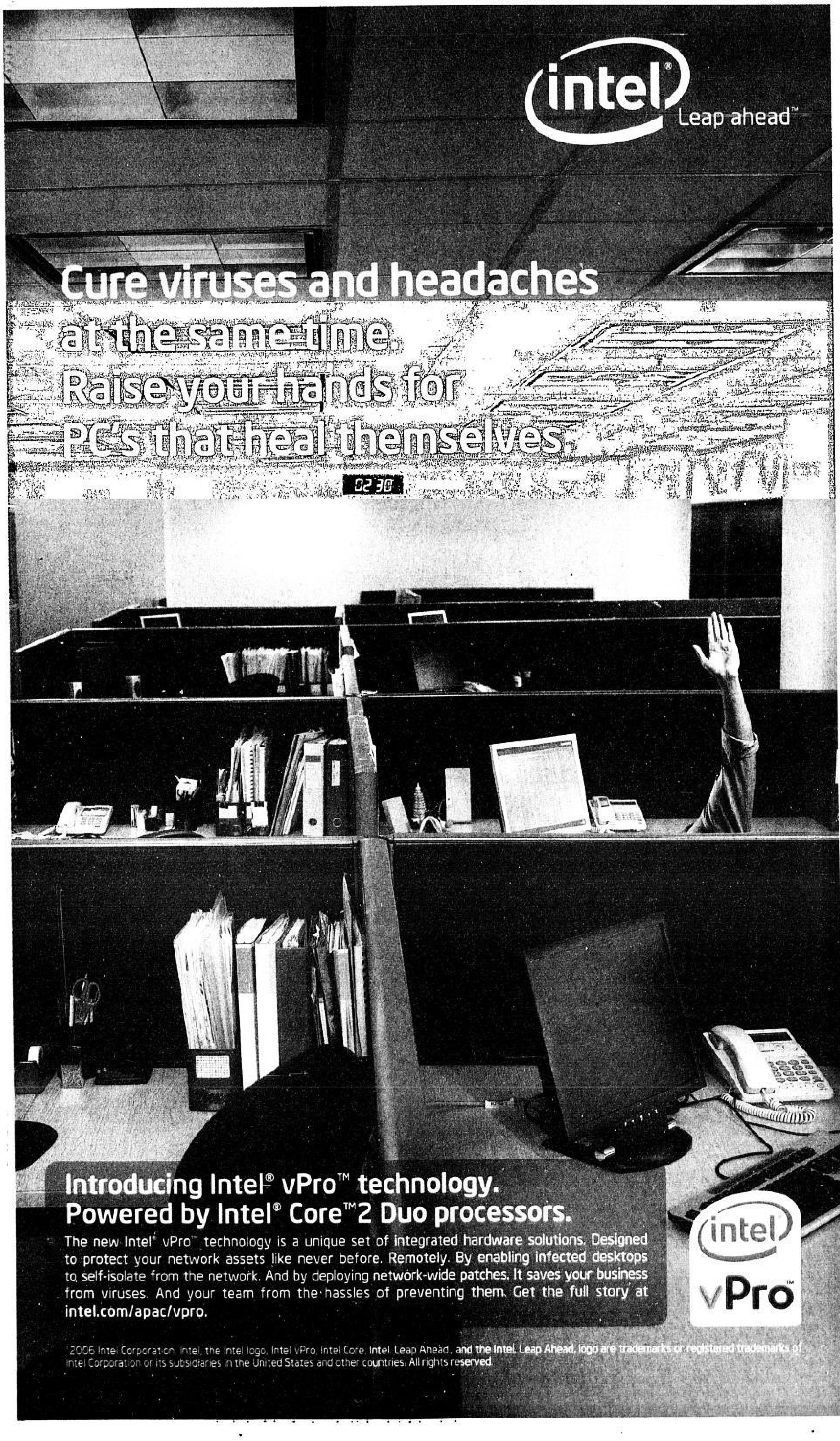
IDE-Jetro explained that the forecast for 2007 was based on assumptions that the advanced economies—United States, Japan and European Union—would grow slower at between 2 percent and 2.5 percent.

The yen-US dollar exchange rate is seen to remain at the level observed at the later half of 2006; and crude oil prices would decrease by between 7 percent and 8 percent from the 2006 level.

As for the five Asean economies, the report shows a combined 5.4-percent growth in 2006 or roughly the same as the 2005 level, and 5.6 percent in 2007.

In 2006, the Philippines—amid weak investment

RP SEEN/ B9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Making it Work

By Philip Wee, Regional Marketing Manager, Manufacturing Sector Solutions, Intel Asia Pacific

International collaboration on design, assembly and production have become the norm as manufacturing becomes a global enterprise. But, this distributed manufacturing approach can stretch existing IT systems beyond their original design limits in areas of system usability, security and manageability.

Cost optimization is at the heart of this shift in an effort to lower labor, material or transportation costs. Factories are being shifted overseas and because of globalized operations, manufacturers now need to be more aware of security, of connectivity and of standards. They need to work with more dispersed workforces, with a greater number of vendors, suppliers and logistics companies. They have to be connected, but need to be safe.

Time to market for new products must be reduced to remain competitive. The recent upsurge in customers for fuel-efficient vehicles, thanks to the rising price of oil, has led to demand for completely new car designs, from smaller cars to fuel-electric hybrids. This has meant a complete reworking of basic automotive designs, putting greater pressure on internal design teams and raising the likelihood of increased international and local outsourcing to specialist companies for designing some of these components. Internal design teams now have an additional role coordinating the various design teams into a Collaborative Product Development (CPD) environment.

This dispersion of design activity boosts efficiency, but also causes security and cost issues. Whenever a design contractor dials into an external collaborative network, it can open up a window for illegal tunneling back into the corporate network. Some design houses require designers to shuttle between customers and suppliers to reduce security risk when they need to review designs. The increase in design complexity also lengthens the validation process needed to ensure the design works, along with the modification and re-validation, which can vary from a few hours to over a day for each run. All these can be time consuming and costly, especially when done on a global basis.

Companies now operate globally on a 24x7 basis, with staff and a diverse set of equipment dispersed across multiple worldwide locations, making maintenance and support a major challenge. Sometimes the only means of communication is via an external third party network-an additional security risk to the network. Dispersed departments also have a tendency to add nodes to the network without IT department knowledge making them vulnerable to 'backdoors' into the corporate network.

Intel is addressing all these manufacturing pain points with its latest Intel® vPro™ computing platform. Intel vPro is a platform level solution giving IT managers enhanced manageability, great performance, and improved security when deploying new PCs.

The Intel vPro platform processor is based on a dual core design that offers up to 40 percent more performance while consuming 40 percent less power. The increased performance itself translates to shorter design validation cycles which allow engineers to complete their projects on time and the product will be inherently better designed as engineers now do not have to trade off between trying yet another design versus the time it takes to validate it. This allows companies to launch better products in a timely manner in order to remain competitive and saves money from the power savings in normal run time and in reduced validation time.

Computers built on the Intel vPro technology also offers built in Intel Virtualization Technology (VT) hardware hooks for virtual machine support. This greatly improves security in a CPD environment. Users can create a virtual machine for the purpose of CPD while maintaining another virtual machine connected to the corporate network. Any attempt to use the collaborative link to tunnel back into the corporate network is blocked by the VT hardware.

Most importantly, VT enables authorized staff to manage the system from anywhere over the world over the network providing that seamless 24 by 7 global support. This works even for PCs that are powered off or whose operating system (OS) is down as long as it is connected. IT staff can also make accurate asset and hardware/software inventories remotely, as well as contain security threats, resolve software and hardware problems faster, and increase user uptime.

All of these capabilities mean that IT engineers will spend less time on routine tasks, security and getting all the machines on the corporate network to talk to each other. Which in turn means manufacturers can focus resources where they are most needed.

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Last chance to get ready, set, shop!

A peek into what Filipinos are buying as gifts this Christmas

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE COUNTRY'S RETAILERS HAVE BEEN stocking up their shelves and stock rooms for shopping's shiniest season as consumers shake off the value-added tax and oil price worries that hounded the country earlier this year.

"The Christmas shopping season started late again just like last year but we expect sales to be much better this year," said Samie Lim, chair emeritus of the Philippine Retailers Association.

SM, the country's biggest retailer, is all but geared up for a big burst in holiday spending this year. "Sales trends in the past months have been encouraging so we hope this will continue in the Christmas season," said Jorge Mendiola, Shoemart Department Store senior vice president for operations.

Robinson's Land Corp., SM's main rival, expects retailers to be laughing "ho, ho, ho" this season.

"I think this year should be better than last year, primarily because OFW remittances are expected to go up 15 percent," said RLC president Frederick Go.

All three cite the robust economic growth in the first three quarters as a good omen for the holiday season which could account for as much as a third of retailers' annual sales. Lim says last year's Christmas was a forgettable one as sky-high oil prices, political crisis buffeting the administration, lack of investor confidence, and tax jitters battered investor confidence.

According to INQUIRER Research, consumption spending as a percentage of gross domestic product has been on a slight decline since peaking at 73.2 percent in 2002, hitting 71.8 percent last year, the lowest in the Arroyo administration. But RLC's Go said consumers have mostly adjusted to the increased tax rates.

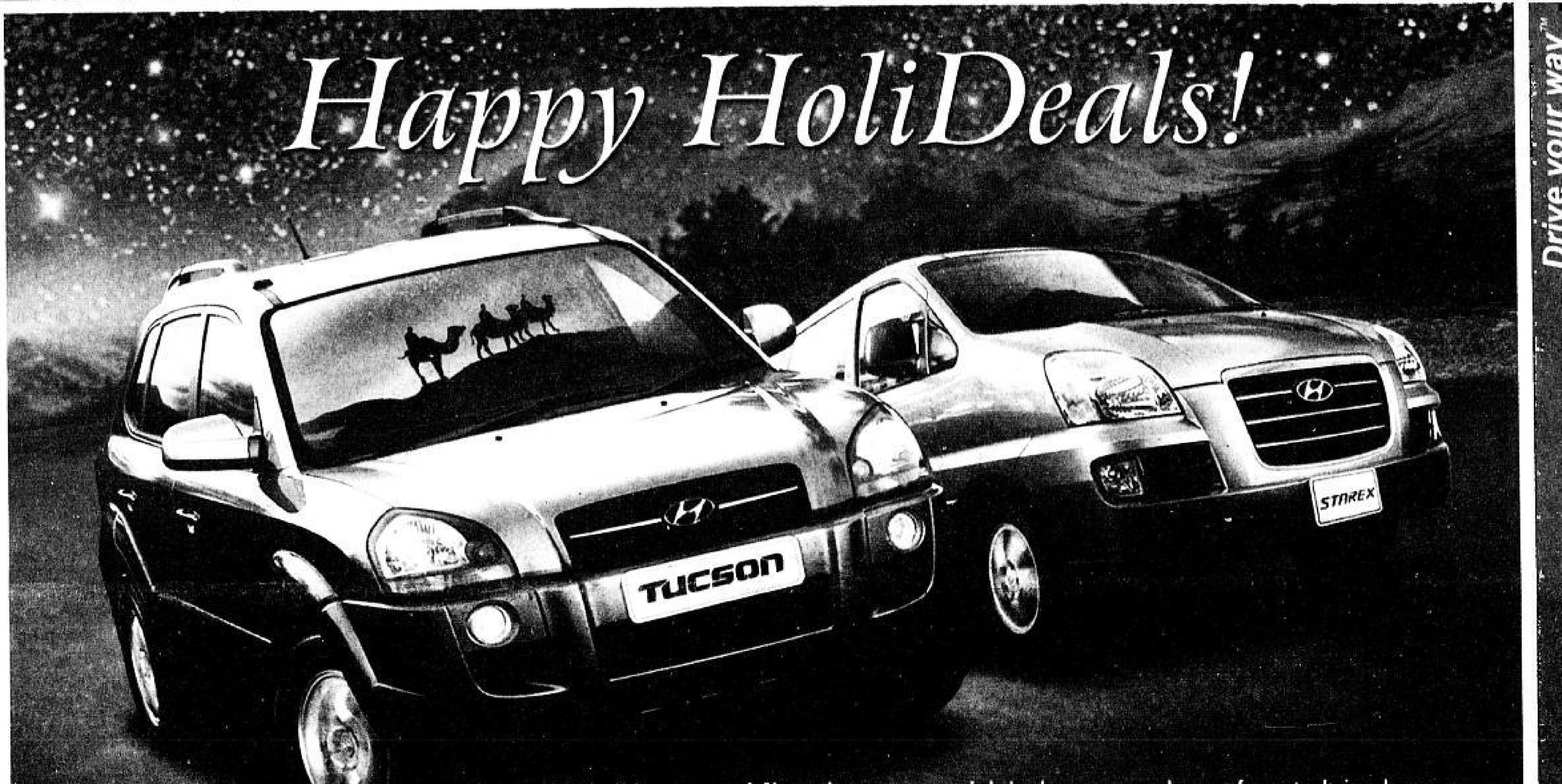
Not only have consumers adjusted to higher taxes, Joven Babaan, VP of Proline Sports Center (a leading wholesaler and retailer of sports equipment and apparel), says but also buyers have likewise been inured to the high oil prices.

"We have seen a palpable improvement in consumer confidence even though taxes and oil prices are higher now than they were a year ago," said Babaan. Manufacturers and retailers have coped with the rising costs by keeping prices down based on the downtrend in inflation rate—4.7 percent as of November this year from 6.7 percent in December last year.

Lim says manufacturers and retailers have no choice but to absorb incremental costs as well as step up their marketing efforts from zero percent installment plans to giving discounts on bulk to sustain consumer demand. The increase in tourism arrivals in the country, he says, has been a boon to the retail industry. He estimates that a foreign visitor spends on the average at least $1,000 during his stay here.

RLC's Go says remittances have become a key factor for the resiliency of the retail sector amid the oil and jitters. Babaan says that without the remittances, retailing would have been in a deep slump just like the economy.

LAST CHANCE/ B2-3



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STAREX GRX
CASH PACKAGES
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Option 3: Comprehensive Insurance plus a DVD player accessory

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Option 2: Special Monthly Amortization Rate plus FREE
• One-year comprehensive insurance • Three-year LTO registration
• Chattel Mortgage
Option 3: Special Monthly Amortization Rate plus FREE
• Comprehensive Insurance • DVD player accessory

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Rellenong bangus for noche buena, anyone?

GOVERNMENT wants Filipinos to explore alternative Christmas fare other than the usual chicken and pork.

HOW ABOUT SERVING RELlenong bangus (stuffed milkfish) on Noche Buena and pinaputok na pla-pla on New Year's Eve? Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap is encouraging Filipinos to serve more varied fare on their dinner table this holiday season using more local produce to ease the pressure on chicken and pork whose prices take a premium at this time of the year.

"We just want to tell our consumers that there are plenty of alternative food out there that would make the holiday season filling and exciting and they would be helping our local agriculture sector," said Yap.

Yap gave the advice as the Department of Agriculture and Department of Trade and Industry readied for the anticipated spike in prices of chicken and pork, the main meal during celebrations in most Filipino homes. The Philippines has to import chicken and pork especially in the fourth quarter every year to augment local supply and meet the last holiday splurge on roasted chicken and sweet ham. Yap said chicken importers have assured the government that it would keep prices at the prevailing market price of P95 to P100 per kilo.

"Anything beyond that, they said would be excessive," said Yap.

Trade Secretary Peter Favila says pork producers and meat processors have likewise assured him of adequate supply of their products for the next week. This should keep pork prices stable at between P140 and P150 per kilo, Favila said. Yap said consumers could help ease the cost pressure on chicken and pork by eating fish products especially bangus which costs only P90 to P95 per kilo and tilapia at P75 to P80 per kilo.

"Christmas meals should not be defined by chicken and pork only," Yap said. Both Yap and Favila said that while the government would tolerate a Christmas premium on commodities, "these should be reasonable and not excessive."

What's selling at SM?

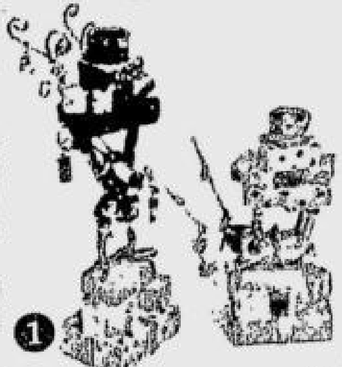
At Our Home

1. COLORFUL and comical Reindeer candle holders. P 449.75

2. PINE scent candles with aromatherapy action exude Christmas spirits from Bright Ideas (small) P159.75, (medium) P369.75, (large) P479.75

3. CONTEMPORARY table lamp with pleated design fabric head and chrome stand. P999.75

4. PORCELAIN dinnerware in fish design, (small) P229.75, (medium) P279.25, (large) P729.75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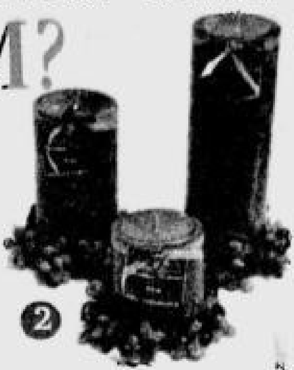
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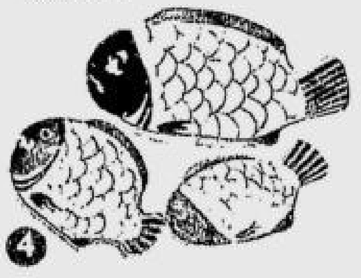
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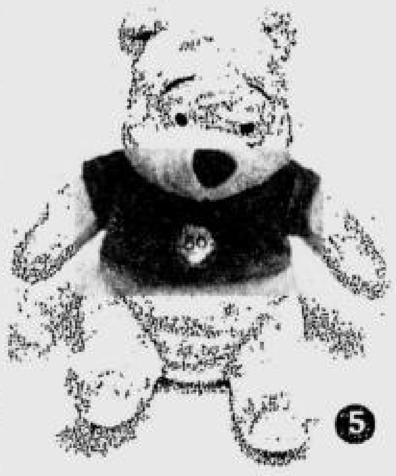
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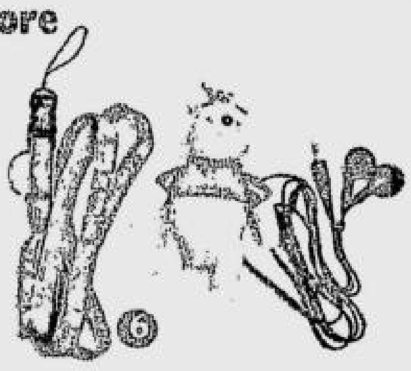
At the Department Store

5. GET a limited edition Pooh mini radio, bolster pillow (P299.75) and stuffed toy (P299.75) in celebration of Pooh's 80 Years of Adventure. Items are exclusively distributed by SM Department Store.

6. LIMITED edition Winnie the Pooh mini radio with ID holder, P249.75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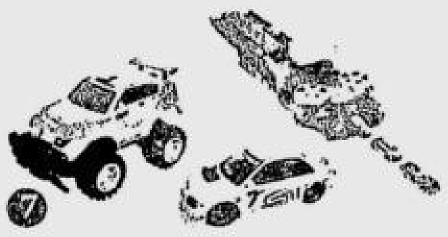
On the tots' wish lists

At Shopwise

SHOPWISE shoppers are buying the Hot Wheels basic car, virtual pet stuff toys, Chicco rainbow hourglass, Chicco rainbow remote control and the Chicco penguin glug glug for Christmas.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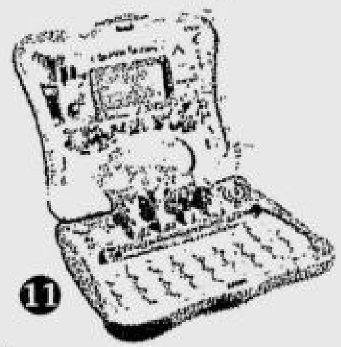
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At Toys R' Us

7. REMOTE controlled and die-cast cars—price varies depending on features

8 MUSICAL Toys (on photo, Fun Years My First Drum Set at P799.75)

9. PLAYSTATION Portable (PSP) and Gameboy Advance units—PSP unit at P12,500 and Gameboy Advance unit at P3,500)

10. EZ Freeze Bottles—P199.75 each

11. VTECH Learning Laptops—price varies depending on features (on photo: VTech Winnie the Pooh Learning Fun Laptop at P3,699.75)

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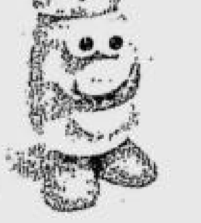
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At Toy Kingdom

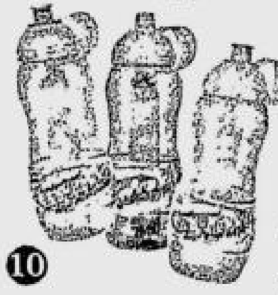
12. CREATE your own flight pattern in X-Twin A full function digital proportion radio control with precision speed control and unique material that withstand crashes, P1,699.75

13. MR. POTATO Head, P379.75

14. DANCING Princess Genevieve (Let's Dance), P4,799.75

15. POWER Ranger Delta Squad Megazord, P2,999.75

16. BRATZ Forever Diamond, P1,799.75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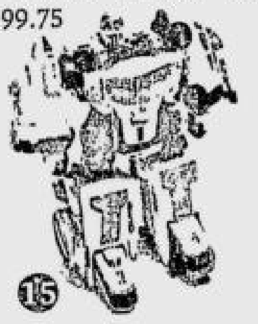
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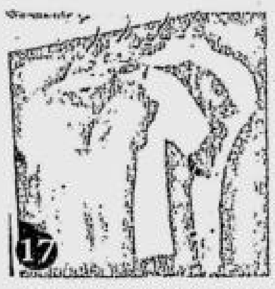
What's hot at RDS?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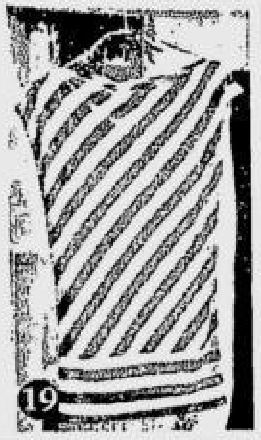
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At the Robinsons Department Store

17. LIBERTE' blouses, P369.75-P429.75

18. JULIA black satin blouse, P499.75

19. FAB Holiday Collection striped top, P499.75

20. MARIO D'Boro wedge sandals, P799.75

21. SECOSANA Collection, P799.75 each.

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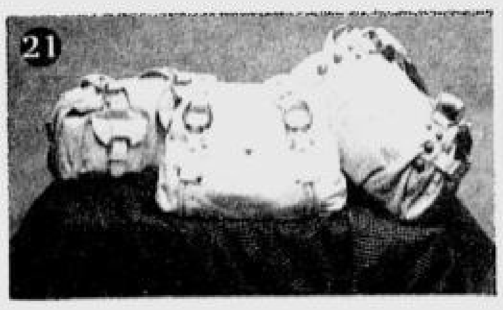
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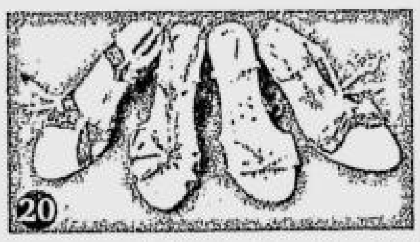
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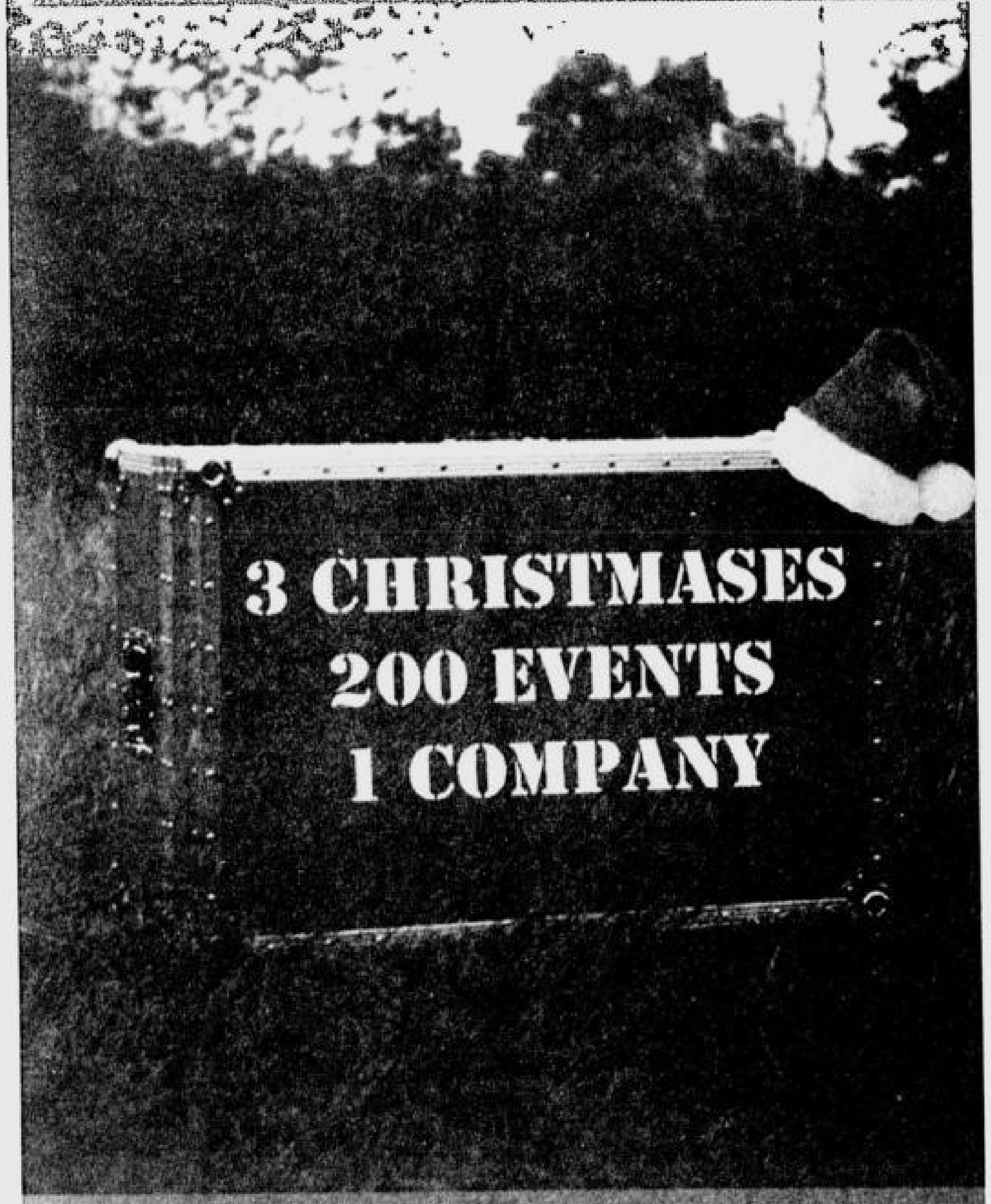

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HYUNDAI NAMES WINNERS IN THE 2006 DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI), the exclusive distributor of Hyundai vehicles in the country, gathered all its dealers for its 2006 Dealer of the Year Awards (DOYA) at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3. Accentuating the event with "hot latin" theme, HARI dealers danced the night away with the latin music of the Guarana band.

Ma. Fe Perez-Agudo, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of HARI, expressed her gratitude to the dealers. "What would have taken a decade or so to carry out, we have pulled off in only five years because of our committed dealers who are Hyundai's greatest ambassadors in South East Asia".

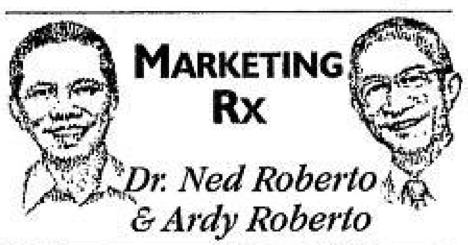
Among HARI's 32 dealers nationwide, Hyundai E. Rodriguez, Sr. Avenue bagged the 2006 DOYA as well as other awards in various categories: Award of Excellence in Vehicle Sales in Metro Manila and the Award of Excellence in Service Operations. The Award of Excellence in Vehicle Sales in the Provincial category was awarded to Hyundai Cebu, Inc. Hyundai La Union received the Award of Excellence in Parts Operations, while Hyundai Commonwealth Ave. was bestowed with the Award of Excellence in Fleet Sales Management.

Individual awards were also conferred to the sales consultants and parts personnel who have exerted commendable performance in their posts. The Sales Consultant of the Year Award was bestowed to Wilma V. Bantugan of Hyundai E. Rodriguez, Sr. Avenue for Metro Manila category and to Hohmer C. Soriano of Hyundai Dagupan for the provincial category. Abigail M. Ibanez of Hyundai Laguna, Inc. was awarded as the Champion, Parts Personnel of the Year, followed by first runner-up Lolito C. Chua of Hyundai E. Rodriguez.

The Dealer of the Year Awards (DOYA), an annual event organized by HARI, honors dealerships and individuals who have given exemplary contributions to Hyundai's growth in sales, after-sales service, and parts operations.

ADVT

'Can we do competitive intelligence that does not cross ethical lines?' II



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto
& Ardy Roberto

THIS IS THE RESPONSE TO A READER'S second question, "Is there a way to short list the vast number of data your CIS requires on competitor capabilities as a way to predict a competitor's future strategy?"

We have found that the key is to have a focus. Here's the logic we apply to this search for a focus: "None of a competitor's physical, technical, financial and marketing resources and capabilities can make for a competitive difference and advantage without someone orchestrating, navigating and controlling them." So what is the implied focus?

Know your competitor's face. Who is the brand manager, the marketing director or the marketing VP of your major competitor? What is he like in responding and/or attacking his brand's leading competitor brand/s?

To know your competitor's face and answer the preceding questions, it's obvious that you have to profile this person's competitive style. In our competitor profiling experience, we have found at least four competitive styles.

The first is what we call **"the indifferent competitor."** This competitor will respond to you with this almost complacent mindset: "I have loyal customers and they've stayed that way for a long time. As long as I do everything to keep them loyal, that's my best protection against any competitor." So what can you predict about how this competitor will react to your moves? Most obviously and most likely, no reactions will be forthcoming at all.

The second competitive style is the **"Hamlet" competitor**. This one will respond but he or she will do so after a long, long time. This competitor's brain works like Shakespeare's character, Hamlet, and therefore thinks this way: "To compete or not to compete. That is the question. … But maybe it's better to wait. In 80 percent to 90 percent of the cases, nothing really bad comes out of these competitor moves. So most of the time, I'm better off waiting things out."

So what can you predict about how this competitor will react to your moves? It's likely that the reactions will come after a long period of time.

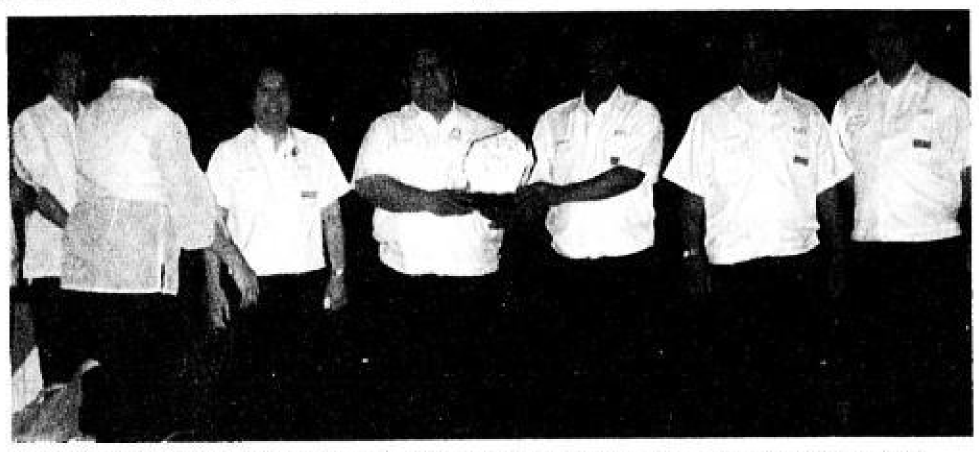
The third competitive style we've seen is in a **"game, fun-loving" competitor.** This competitor looks at marketing life as a game of fun. He or she expresses this outlook along this script: "I love this competitive game. That's especially fun when I'm playing against a worthwhile adversary who knows what he's doing. At first he wins, and I lose. But I learn why I lost and come back. Then I win, and he loses. He learns, and then he comes back. And the cycle repeats and afterwards, we both are better off as competitors than at the start." So we ask again: What can you predict about how this competitor will react to your moves? Most obviously, smart and sometimes surprising reactions will be forthcoming. So prepare and be equally smart if not smarter.

The fourth type is fearsome— **"the ruthless competitor."** We say this competitor is fearsome because his or her competitive brain cells reason out this way: "My response rule is simple: It's always better to overreact than to underreact or wait. My attack rule is just as simple: You don't just hurt competition. You come in for the kill. Annihilate the enemy." What can you predict about how this competitor will react to your moves? It's obvious—be extra careful unless you have the guts and resources to go to war.

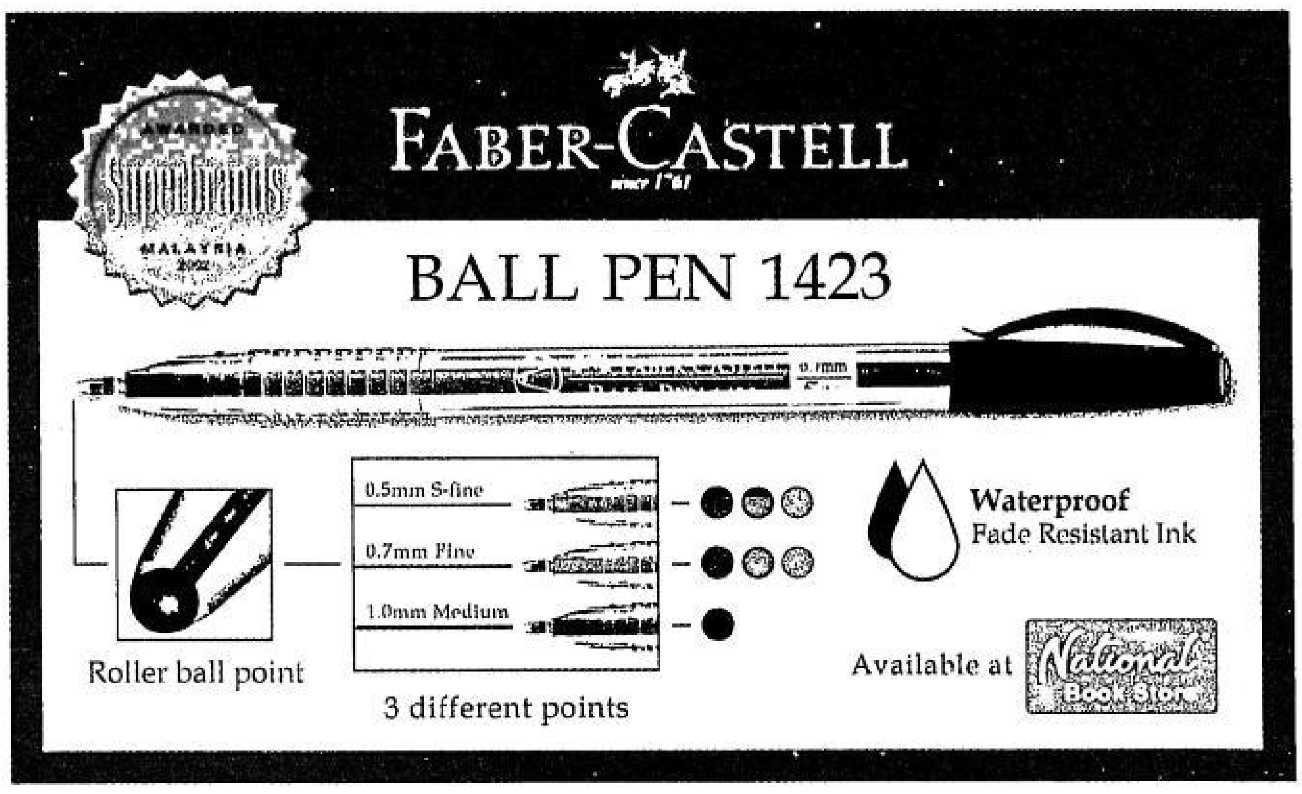
Are these competitive styles consistently practiced by their advocates? What we've observed it that they change over time and according to the situation. Even an indifferent or a Hamlet competitor can at times take on a ruthless competitive style because of a traumatic experience. But in all these, what you must now keep in mind is this basic proposition: "In dealing with the issue of a competitor's future strategy, remember that a leading competitor will usually do what he/she has gotten used to do in the past, shaped or reshaped, directed or redirected by that competitor's current or changed competitive style."

Keep up with emerging competitive intelligence practices and trends. For this, you may want to every so often visit the web site of The Society of Competitor Intelligence Professionals (SCIP): www.scip.org .

Send questions to MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net . God bless!



MONTEREY GETS AWARD. Monterey, the country's largest meat retailer, recently received the Seal of Excellence by the Department of Agriculture-National Meat Inspection Services for best and cleanest abattoir in the Triple A category. The Monterey meat plant in Cavite supplies 80 percent of the company's meats. The Monterey team led by Rex Jaymalin, Monterey Meat Plant manager (third from left), receives the award.



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What shoppers are buying at Shopwise

THE TOP LADIES' WEAR THAT are selling are T-shirts in assorted funky prints, assorted shirts in hip designs, Polo shirts with cap sleeves, short-sleeved shirt in striped knit fabric, short-sleeved crewneck shirt with assorted prints.

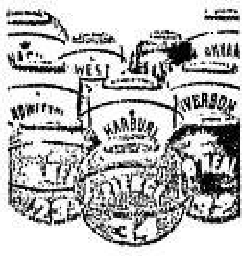
Top-selling men's wear are low cost short sleeves round neck printed T-shirts, short sleeves round neck printed T-shirts, Denim shorts, athletic shorts, naughty print T-shirts.

Consumers are buying cosmetics, too. At Shopwise, the bestsellers are Colormates assorted makeup, L 'Oreal Revitalift White, L 'Oreal Pure Zone Clarifying Toner 200 ml, L 'Oreal Visible Results Gelified Toner, and L'Oreal Whitening Facial Foam.

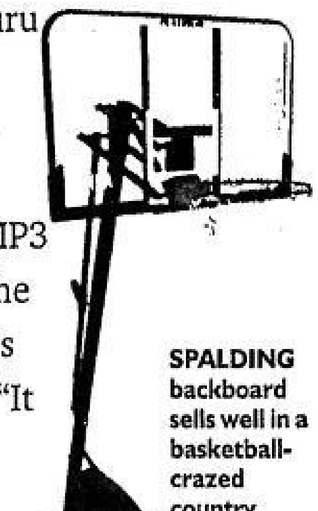
For accessories, Filipinos are buying Carruso handkerchiefs, Chinese bamboo fan, Super mini nylon umbrella, scongee, hair set 3 (clip, clamp and ponytail).

More best-selling items

Retailing guru Samie Lim expects the Apple Ipod and other MP3 players as the hot item this Christmas. "It has the highest growth rate among electronic gadgets and is fast catching up with cell phones," says Lim

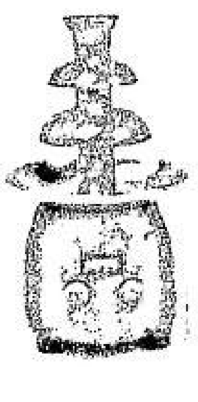


BASKETBALLS continue to be a favorite gift



SPALDING backboard sells well in a basketball-crazed country

CHOCOLATE FONDUE fountain did well last year and is expected to continue selling this Christmas.



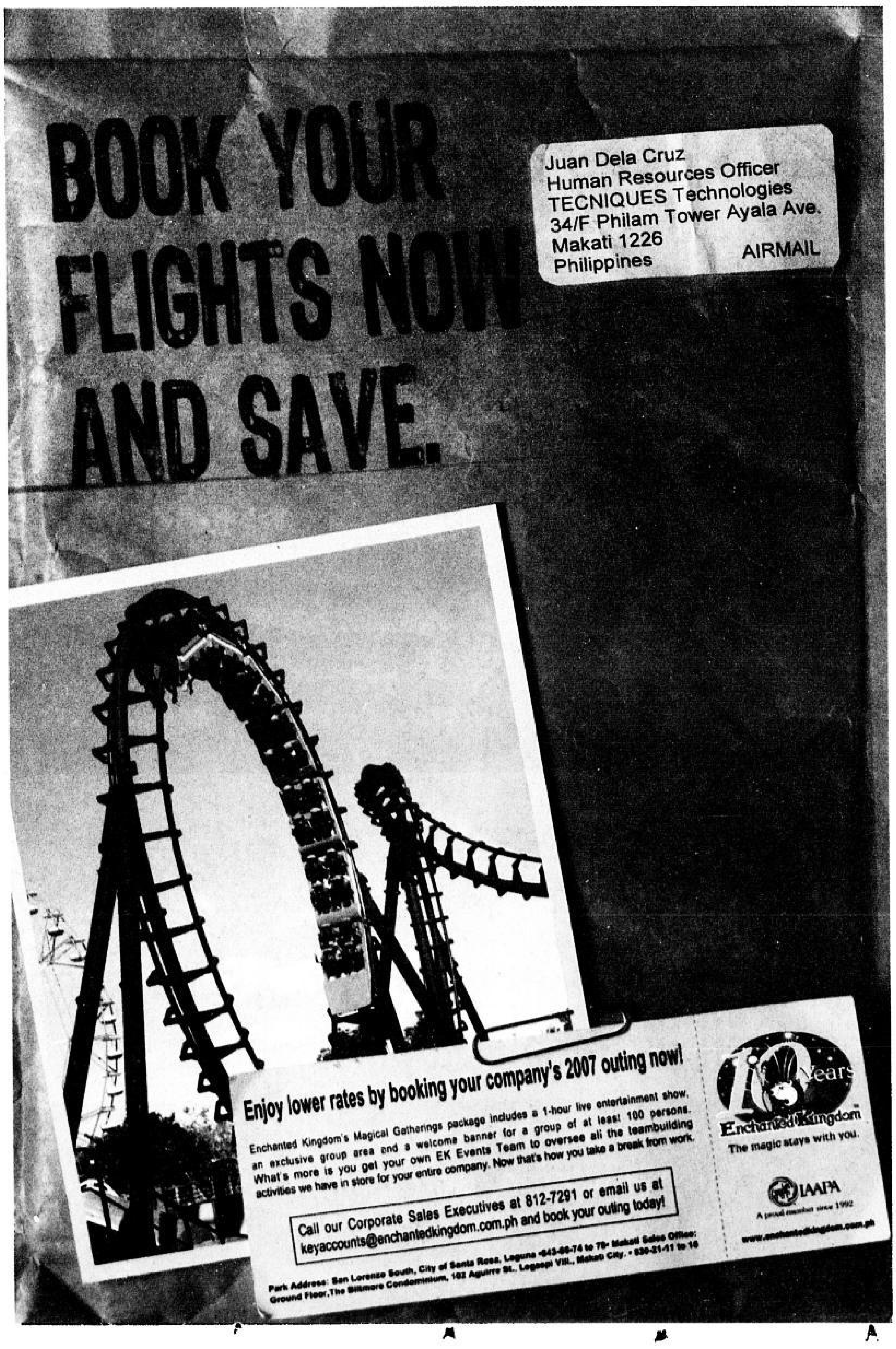
DIGITAL cameras like the Fuji fine pix are hot items for techies on a budget

Last chance to get ready, set, shop!

From page B2-1

Mendiola adds remittances have become a major factor in retailing as seen from the mushrooming of foreign currency exchange booths inside and nearby malls. "The central bank is forecasting higher remittances this year and we hope that will translate to higher sales," said Mendiola. Lim notes the dollar-remittance induced boom in the property market augured well for the retail market as "they would have to buy appliances and furniture to fill up their new homes."

Robinsons Appliances general manager Mariano Joaquin Jr. cites the strong demand for LCD TVs that cater to the upper class which has been immune to the high taxes and oil prices. In contrast, Joaquin says sales of conventional and flat TVs, refrigerators and room air-conditioners have been down by an average of 10 percent from a year ago as middle-class consumers took the brunt of the tax hike and the oil price hike.



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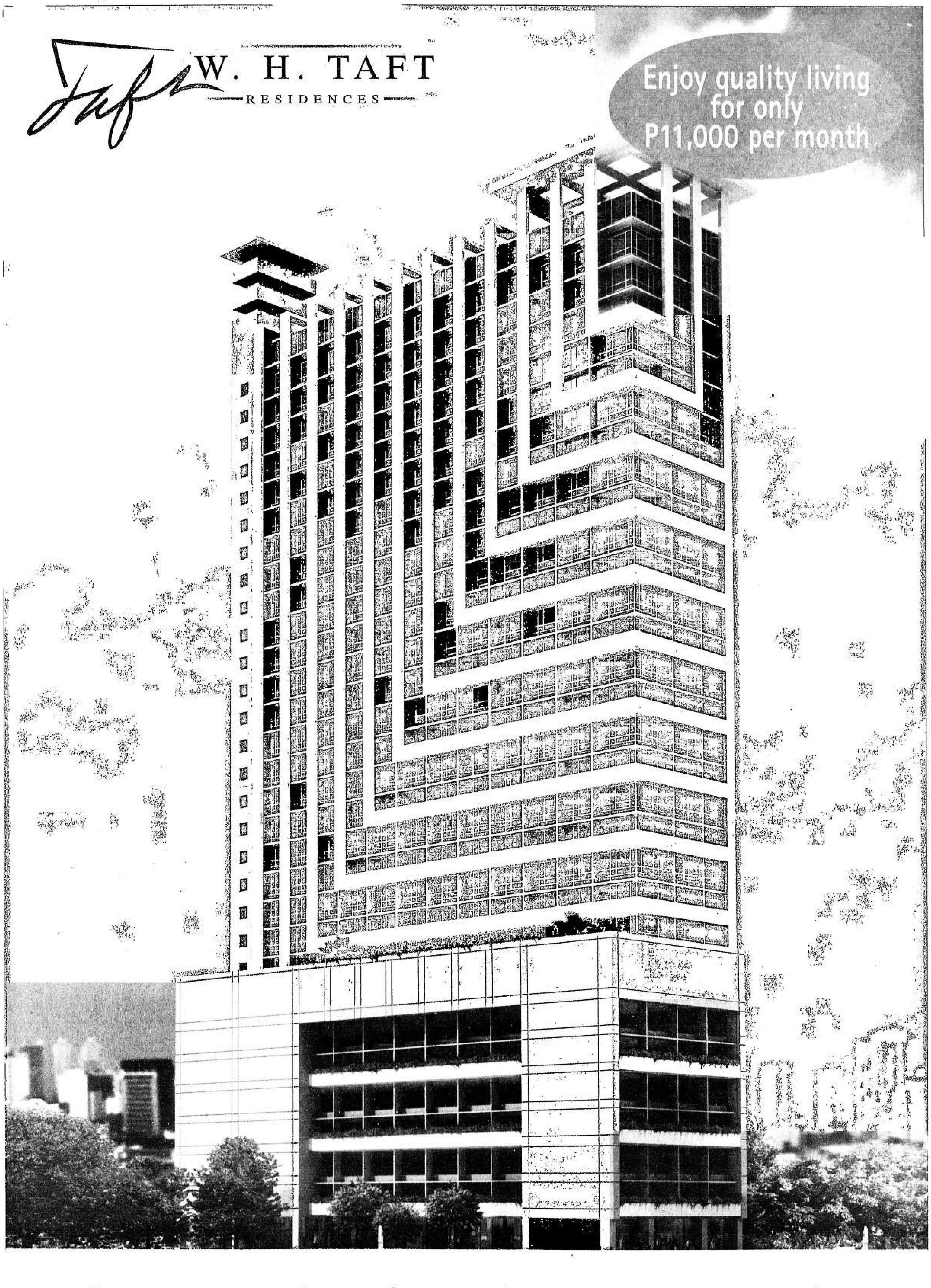
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▨ **Holiday** tease /G2

BANNER YEAR FOR CENTURY PROPERTIES

As 2007 slowly peeks over the horizon, Century Properties Inc. (CPI) looks back at the past year that marked its 20th anniversary as the largest privately owned real estate company in the country.

Under the direction of Century Properties Inc. Chairman Ambassador Jose E.B. Antonio, 2006 has been a productive year for CPI with the unprecedented success of new and pioneering projects simultaneously being developed throughout the country's Business Districts – **Soho Central**, the first-ever transportation-oriented development in the Philippines situated within the Ortigas Business Center, **Grand Soho Makati** or GSM, the only Fully-Fitted, Fully-Furnished condominium that offers three exceptional interior design options located within the Makati Golden Triangle, **Canyon Ranch**, the nation's first Wi-Fi integrated residential community just 25 minutes away from Makati in the progressive suburban region of Carmona, Cavite, and **South of Market,** the country's first Fully-Fitted, Fully-Furnished residential high-rise at the Bonifacio Global City.

The 42-storey twin towers of South of Market held its topping off ceremony last November 10, 2006 with its North Tower completed one year ahead of original projected completion date (December 2007), and its South Tower one month ahead of original completion date (December 2006).

Following the success of Canyon Ranch is the launch of **The Casitas at Canyon Ranch** located within the exclusive California ranch-style gated community. A first in Asia, The Casitas are **Fully-Serviced Homes** that set the new standard in modern and stress-free living.

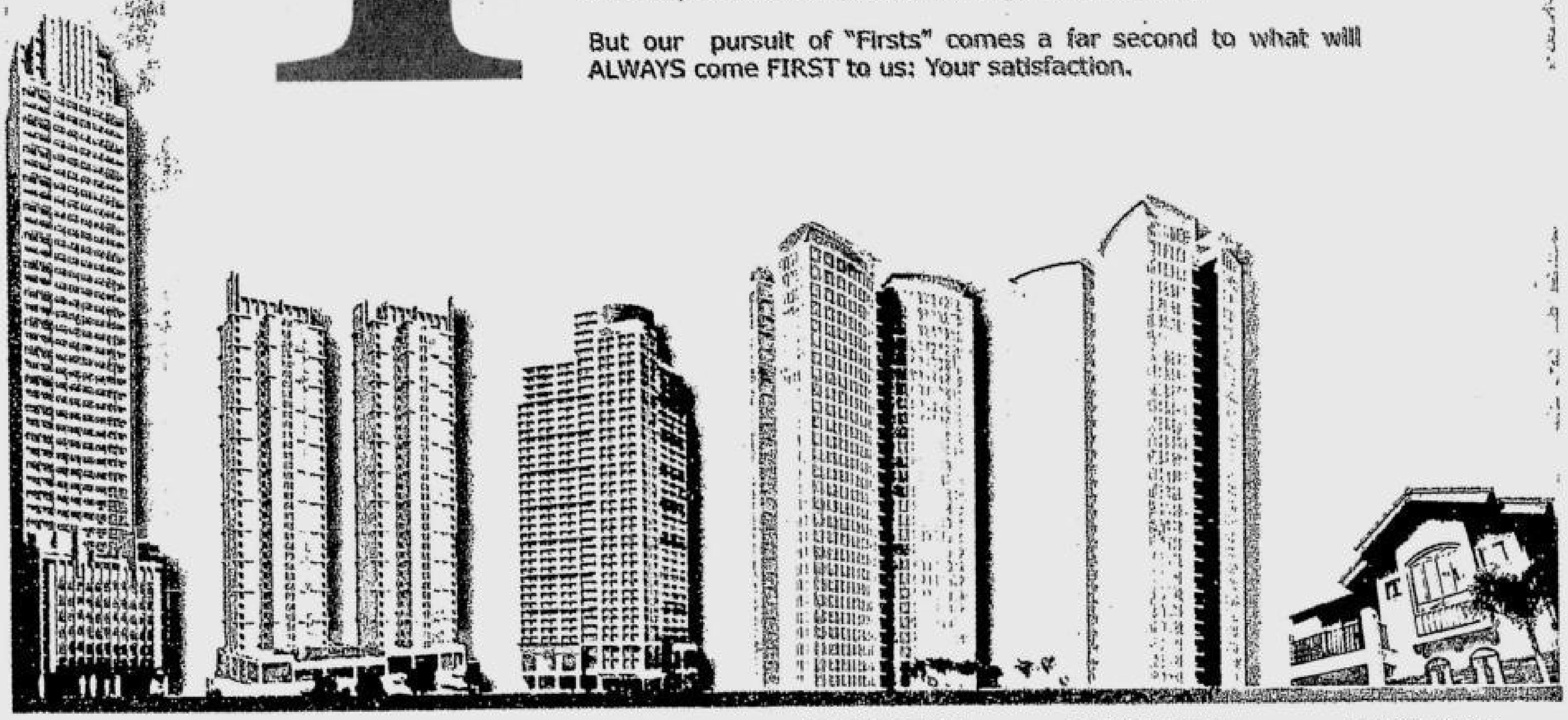
As of November this year, more than a thousand units were sold leading to sales earnings that total up to 5.2 Billion Pesos, signaling record breaking annual revenue reports. This December, the upward momentum behind the company's continued success has anything but slowed down. The former **International School Manila Property** located within Bel Air, Makati, was officially turned over to Century Properties last Friday, December 8, 2006. After a series of bidding exercises earlier this year, the government's privatization efforts led to a successful auction of the 4.8 hectare lot to Century Properties Inc. for the sum of 1.432 Billion Pesos. With a twenty year heritage of visionary real estate, Century Properties envisions a completely new urban experience to rise on the site, which will be masterplanned by the same architectural greats behind Universal Citywalk, the Los Angeles Olympics, Ropponggi Hills in Tokyo and Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas. The development will be a sprawling mixed use space integrated with residential, corporate, and retail components. Century Properties assures that something truly unique will rise, fitting of ISM's heritage of excellence, as well as a shining embodiment of the country's progress and renewed dynamism and vigor.

For more information regarding Century Properties and its projects, dial 818-9025, 893-7050, 0915-700-2000 or log on to ***www.century-properties.com***

1 FIRST

In the past two decades, **Century Properties** has been at the forefront of many "firsts," from the ultra-luxurious **Essensa**, the first and only Philippine building voted by **Asiaweek** as the best residential condominium in the country, to the pioneering **South of Market**, the first ever **fully-fitted and fully-furnished** residential building in the Philippines.

But our pursuit of "Firsts" comes a far second to what will ALWAYS come FIRST to us: Your satisfaction.



GRAND SOHO MAKATI	SOUTH OF MARKET	SOHO CENTRAL	ESSENSA EAST FORBES	CANYON RANCH	THE CASITAS
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Radiant beauty philosophy

By Cheche V. Moral

RESPECT FOR THE WOMAN.

That, according to Dr. Olivier Courtin Clarins, is the philosophy behind the beauty and skincare company Clarins, founded by his father Jacques in Paris in 1954.

"The tradition began by my father isn't to sell miracles but [to give] results to the woman," Clarins said at the recent opening of the new Clarins Institut at Rustan's Makati. "Our service is to listen to what women want and be able to advise them on what to do specific to their concerns. We don't just sell them the products. We talk to our clients."

As a young man, it would've been unheard of for Clarins to speak about the family business with the same passion as he does today. An orthopedic surgeon by profession, he is a self-described proponent of the Cartesian school of thought, a pragmatist whose primary goal in his endeavors is to get tangible results. This is why he opted to specialize in orthopedics instead of dermatology, as would've been expected of the scion of a cosmetics firm that was founded, ironically, on the same year as his birth.

The orthopedic field, Clarins said, allowed him to see actual and immediate results—bringing his patients back on their feet.

It was only in 1984, on the his father's behest, that Clarins began dabbling in the company's research laboratories, but only on a part-time basis. It wasn't until 10 years later that he gave up his practice and devoted his time in the firm. He now heads research and development and is concurrently the company's managing director in charge of finance, spas and institutes.

THE PIONEERING cosmetics firm will soon introduce a spray mist to fight electromagnetic radiation from computers and cell phones.

Pioneer brand

Clarins has over 50 Instituts around the world. The first Clarins Institut in the Philippines was opened in 1999 on the third level of Rustan's Makati. This was where loyal Clarins users got their regular beauty treatments—specialized facials, slimming and body firming treatments, makeup services. After several weeks of renovations, the new Institut has reopened on the department store's fifth level.

"Cosmetics have become very scientific," he said. "We're very proud of our essential oils. We always want to improve our [formulations], but sometimes we can't because they're already the best... But we have done work on some products. The Double Serum used to have only 15 ingredients, now there's 42."

Plant-derived ingredients remain the heart of Clarins' formulation, and the brand is touted to be a pioneer in plant-based cosmetics. While there are segments that have criticized the use of plants in cosmetics, blaming some botanical ingredients for causing allergic reactions in some users, Clarins insisted this is a case-to-case basis.

Anti-radiation mist

"There are more problems caused by chemicals. Plant materials, as long as they're pure, are always better. We are the best because I try all the products myself. We don't sell it if it's not good and efficient. Some of our products can take seven years to develop. And the best doesn't always have to be the most expensive."

Clarins said the firm would soon introduce another pioneering invention, initially to the American market. Called Clarins Expertise 3P, the liquid mist is said to protect the skin from premature wrinkles wrought by electromagnetic waves and radiation from computers and cellular phones.

Clarins has also formulated My Blend, several day creams and night boosters that clients can mix according to their specific needs. This is his answer to the emerging demand for more personalized skincare.

"Women also use more of our products after undergoing cosmetic surgery. They see that it prolongs the results," he noted.

Clarins said the market for Clarins Men is also continually growing. While it makes up only 8 percent of the Clarins business, male consumers increased by 20 percent after the first year.

"They're learning," he said. "They know now cosmetics aren't only for women. Well, they said that about sun protection years ago."

DR. Olivier Courtin Clarins toasts the reopening of the Clarins Institut with Nena Tantoco and Rustan's Commercial Corp. president Bienvenido Tantoco Jr. Like Rustan's, the French cosmetic's local franchisee, Clarins is a family-owned company. PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

How to look your best always

THE CETAPHIL FAMILY OF cleansers and moisturizers is created for all skin types and is recommended by most dermatologists. Cetaphil Gentle Skin Cleansers and Moisturizers are lanolin-free, non-comedogenic and pH-balanced. These products don't strip the skin's natural protective barriers that may leave it dry and irritated.

For Cetaphil, the most basic beauty routine is still the best way to looking good. This includes regularly cleaning the face, removing makeup before bedtime, correct eating habits, a good night's sleep and drinking lots of water.

Here are some tips on how you can look your best every day:

You are what you eat. Junk food and sweets affect the skin's appearance and texture. A varied diet rich in whole, natural food, balanced in protein, fats and carbohydrates is good for the complexion.

Make water your favorite drink. Water is essential to keep the skin supple, soft and healthy. Drink at least 8-10 glasses of water to keep the body's chemical reactions more fluid and less loaded with toxins in the bloodstream. Think twice before indulging in alcoholic beverages as they tend to dehydrate the skin and might lead to wrinkles.

Catch some sleep. Sleep is one of the most important activities our body has to go through. It is during this time that the skin undergoes a regenerative process and creates new cells while replacing damaged ones. As much as possible, get some shuteye before midnight and supplement it with a dose of Vitamin C, which is crucial for the nighttime regeneration of collagen fibers that are responsible for making the skin supple.

Slap on some sunblock. Avoid the sun's harmful rays by applying a sunscreen or sunblock. The sun's rays result to premature skin aging or wrinkling.

Wash your face before going to bed. Although it is tempting to jump into bed after a long day, it is important to clean the face of makeup and accumulated dirt. Wash the face with a gentle, non-soap formula and then apply moisturizer.

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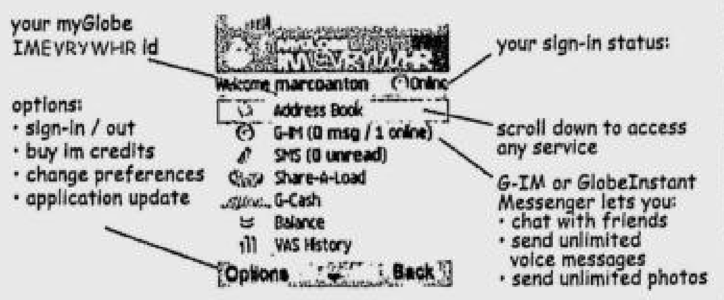
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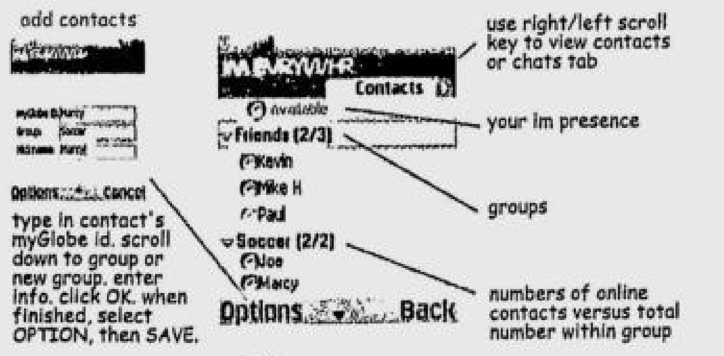
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numbers of online contacts versus total number within group

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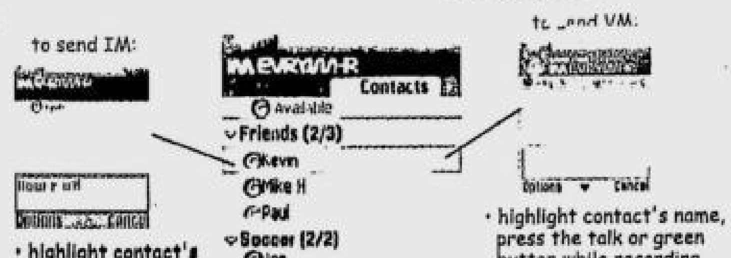
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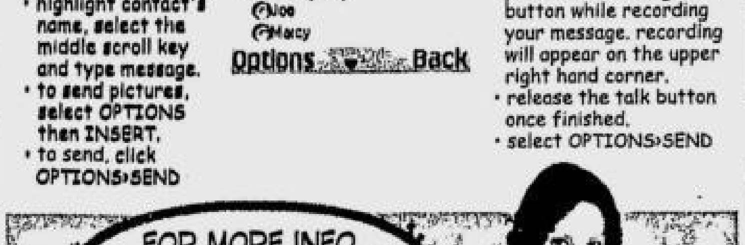
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Time out for Anne Curtis

ACTRESS ANNE CURTIS, THE new face of Watch Republic, knows that fashion is more than just having the clothes. It's having the right fashion sense and accessories to put everything together. Her choices of timepieces from Watch Republic's varied brands allow her to flex her flair for fashion.

Watches play a more important role than just telling time, she says. "In this business, being late is unforgivable. Time management is everything, and an excellent watch is a very good investment."

"Watch Republic really fits my lifestyle and my choice of watches," she says. Not only are the watches affordable, but new collections are constantly added, giving customers more choices.

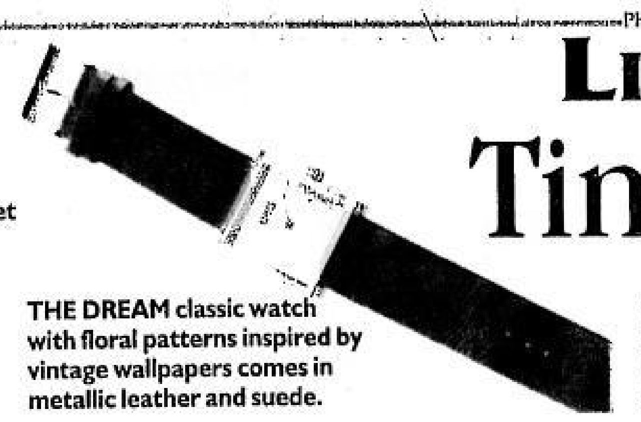
Watch Republic keeps tabs on the top-selling brands in the US and European markets and brings the hottest and hippest timepieces to the Philippines. The edgy designs and colors add a whole new dimension to any look, and this is exactly what Anne looks for in a watch.

"I love the Michael Kors line," she says. "Some are designed like bangles, so it's like an accessory, too." Another collection that has caught her eye is the Axcent line with its edgy and eye-catching designs.

Watch Republic's wide range of watch collections and brands are the right match for people like Anne who want eye-catching, trendy and colorful watches that fit their personalities to a T.

Watch Republic has stores and branches at Power Plant Mall, SM Mall of Asia, SM Fairview, SM North Edsa The Block and SM Cebu.

RELIC gold watch with mesh bracelet



THE DREAM classic watch with floral patterns inspired by vintage wallpapers comes in metallic leather and suede.

GOLD Giordano metallic leather watch with crystal accents

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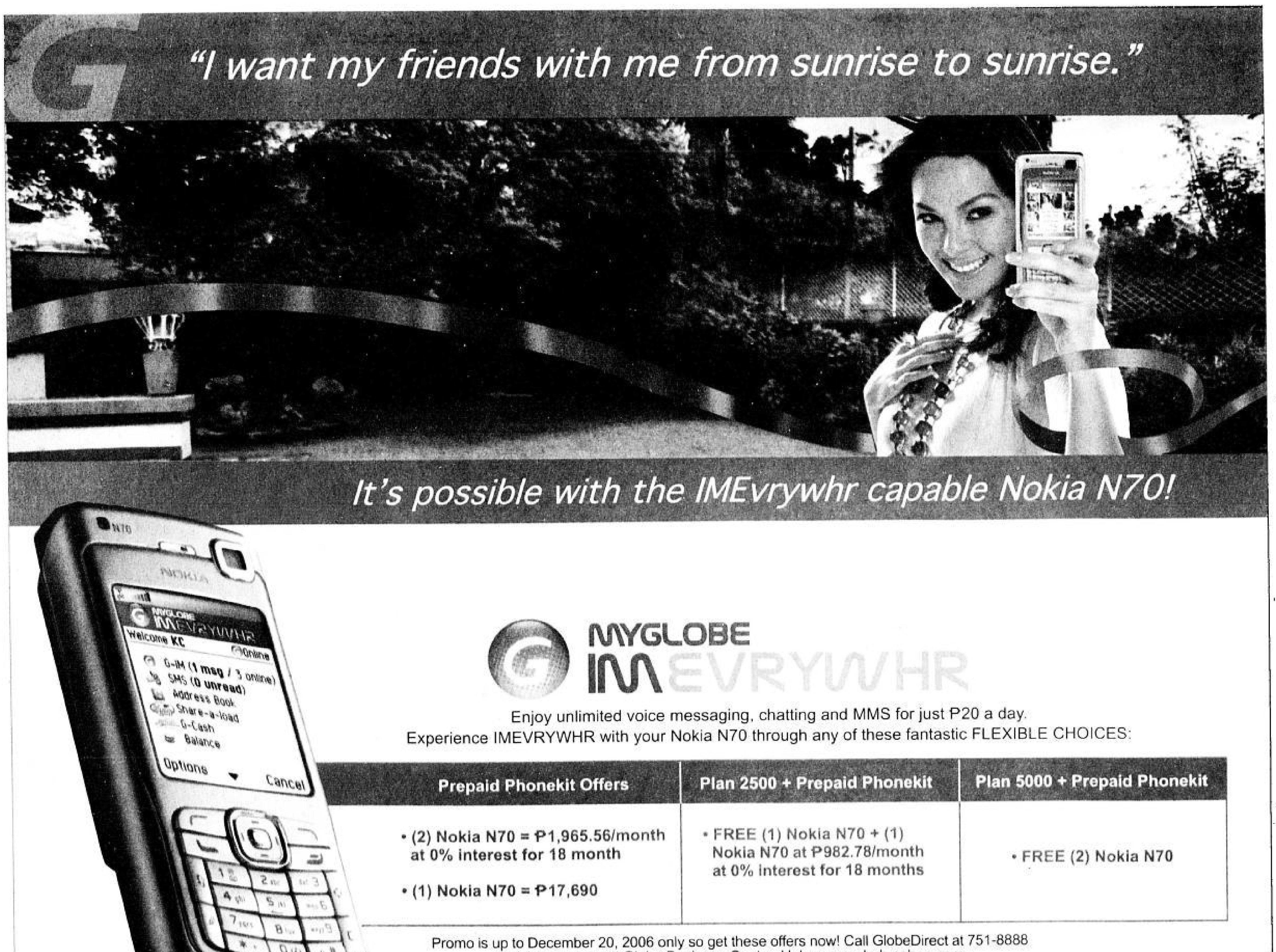

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ANNA Bayle

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

So you're obsessed with being thin

But who isn't? Anna Bayle talks about how models really eat

YOU CAN'T BE TOO RICH OR too thin—that's what people love to say in this era to explain their obsession with thinness. But you can really be "too thin" and die. The big news a few months back was a Spanish model's death, apparently of anorexia. She died at 88 lbs.

That death precipitated moves in Madrid to ban ultra-thin models or to impose weight requirement on models—which of course, didn't progress beyond Madrid.

While models' weight is too remote an issue for us who can barely survive the super typhoons, the obsession with thinness is not.

If there's one word our daughters (not that I have one) and sons (that I have, and they're fitness buffs who can't end their day without burning calories) find ugly, it is fat!

I love telling people a funny exchange my son had with a cute seven-year-old, whom my son was giving swimming lessons to one summer. To explain why he was learning swimming, the boy said, "I wanna get rid of my baby fat." At seven!

If a baby could think that way, what about matrons? Sometimes you'd rather not know what they're thinking as they go through the buffet, and I mean a buffet, of slim-down programs: liposuction, body sculpture, mesotherapy, etc.

Cosmetic surgery, beauty and body treatments are a multibillion-peso industry.

That's why I found interesting what New York-based Anna Bayle wrote recently in her website and blog (check out Annabayle.com). Anna, acknowledged by newspapers and magazines the world over, as the first and only Asian supermodel and one of the world's top 10 models in the '80s, has returned to the fashion scene. She has a well-read website, does reporting for Lookonline and is packaging her own TV show.

She wrote, "Modeling is not a sickness, anorexia is." She said that at her modeling peak, she was 110 lbs. (at 5 ft. 10), and worked to keep that weight because she had couture shows to do.

"Here's that sexy number that every model will want to wear and there is nothing more unforgivable than you ripping the zipper accidentally when the women from the ateliers are dressing you. They have been working on the garment for three months and here you come, destroying their masterpiece."

Besides, she said couture houses have a mannequin for each top model on which they fit the clothes, so she had to stick to her own mannequin's measurements. She'd watch her weight so that one time, while fitting for Azzedine Alaia, she fainted just as Azzedine was putting pins on her.

But except for this, Anna said she and the

SO YOU'RE/ D3

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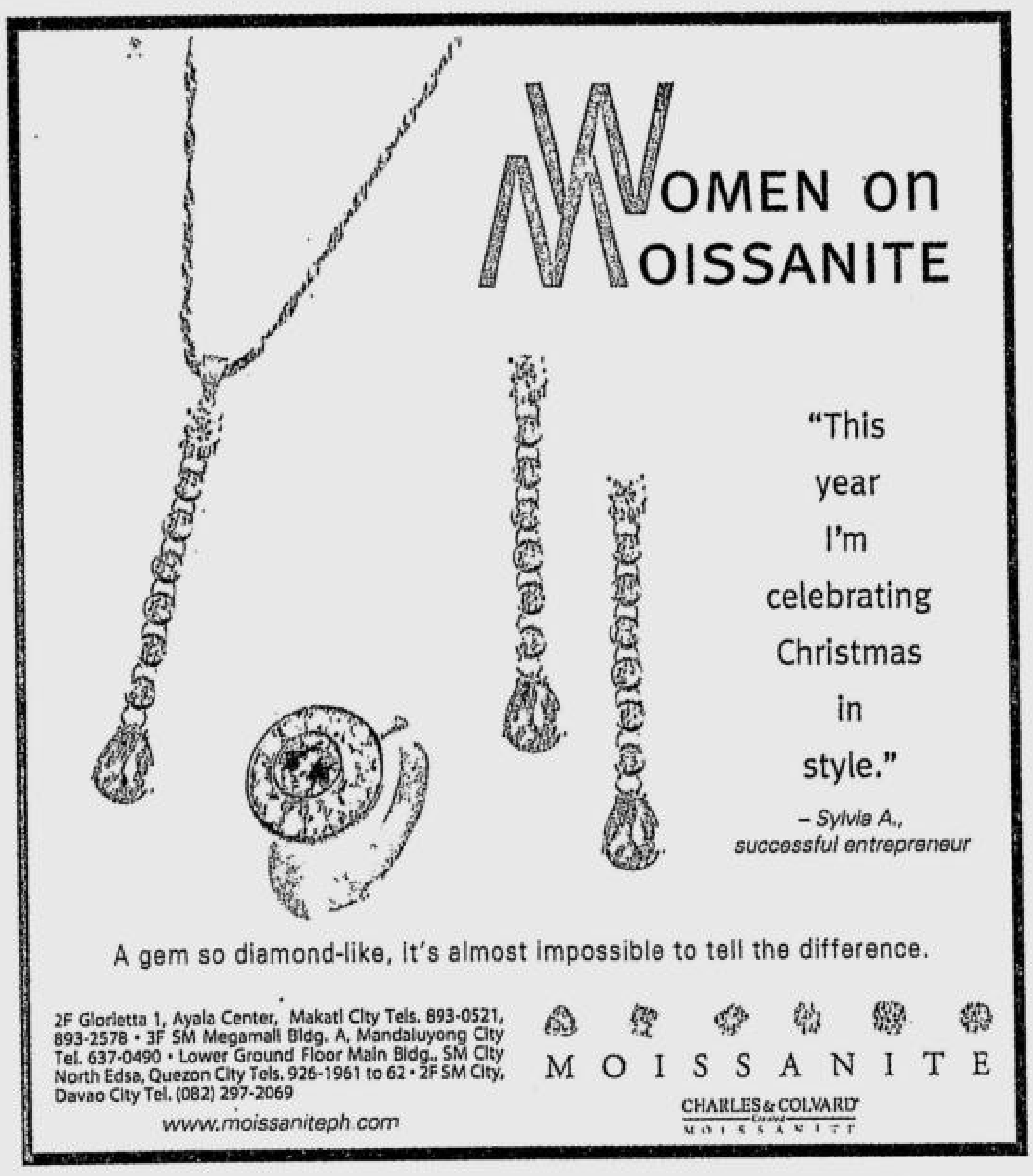
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Dec. 23, Meet & Greet Santa Claus, 2/L, 1pm
Mondays, Comedy Nights @ The Strip, 8pm
Tuesdays, Ballroom Nights @ The Hub, 7pm
Wednesdays, Live Band @ The Strip, 7pm
Fridays & Saturdays, Live Band @ Mark's Bar, 8pm

STARMALL EDSA-SHAW
718-1886
Dec. 15-17, 3-Day Mallwide Sale, 10am
Dec. 16, Batibot, Mall Tour, 2/L, 4pm
Dec. 16, 22, & 25, Meet & Greet Santa Claus, 1pm
Dec. 17, Kids Fun Day Activity w/ Jollibee, 2/L, 4pm
Dec. 23, Children's Christmas Musical Play, 2/L, 4pm
Dec. 30, Caloy & Calay Magic Comedy Show, 2/L, 4pm
Thursdays, Krismas Dance Kraze Competition, 2/L, 4pm
Tuesdays, Comedy Nights @ Cuba Libre, 9pm
Fridays, Saturdays, & Sundays, Live Bands @ Cuba Libre, 9pm

METROPOLIS STAR
ALABANG
850-3845
Dec. 15-17, 3-Day Mallwide Sale, 10am
Dec. 15, Christmas Symphony, Choir Competition, G/F, 4pm
Dec. 16, Children's Joy Foundation Rondalla Christmas Show, G/F, 4pm
Dec. 17, Valerie Concepcion, Mall Tour, G/F, 4pm
Dec. 23 & 25, Meet & Greet Santa Claus, 1pm
Dec. 30, Pinoy Big Brother Kim Chiu, Mall Show, G/F, 4pm
Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays, Live Bands, 2/L, 8pm

starmall EDSA-SHAW
METROPOLIS ALABANG star
starmall LAS PIÑAS

FRANCOIS Cognard, Airbus host VP for sales, Southeast Asia, and Aymeric Dupron, Airbus senior marketing analyst

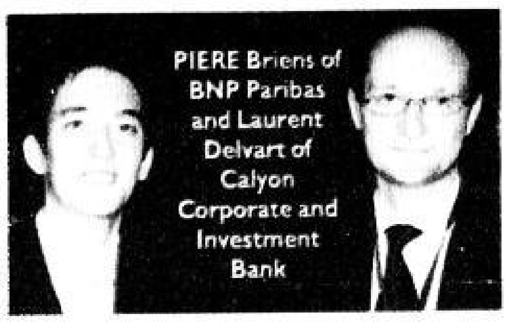
JOERG Schulte of Recaro Aircraft Seating and Ruediger Jansen of KID System Airbus

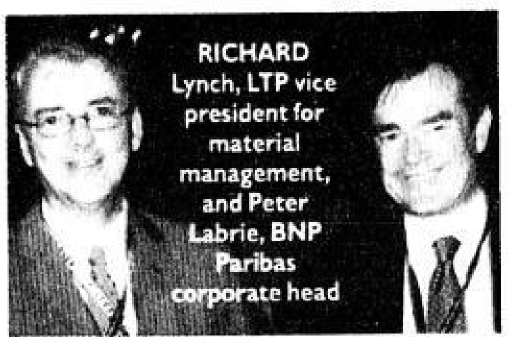
PAL'S SAVP for corporate finance Cesar Chiong

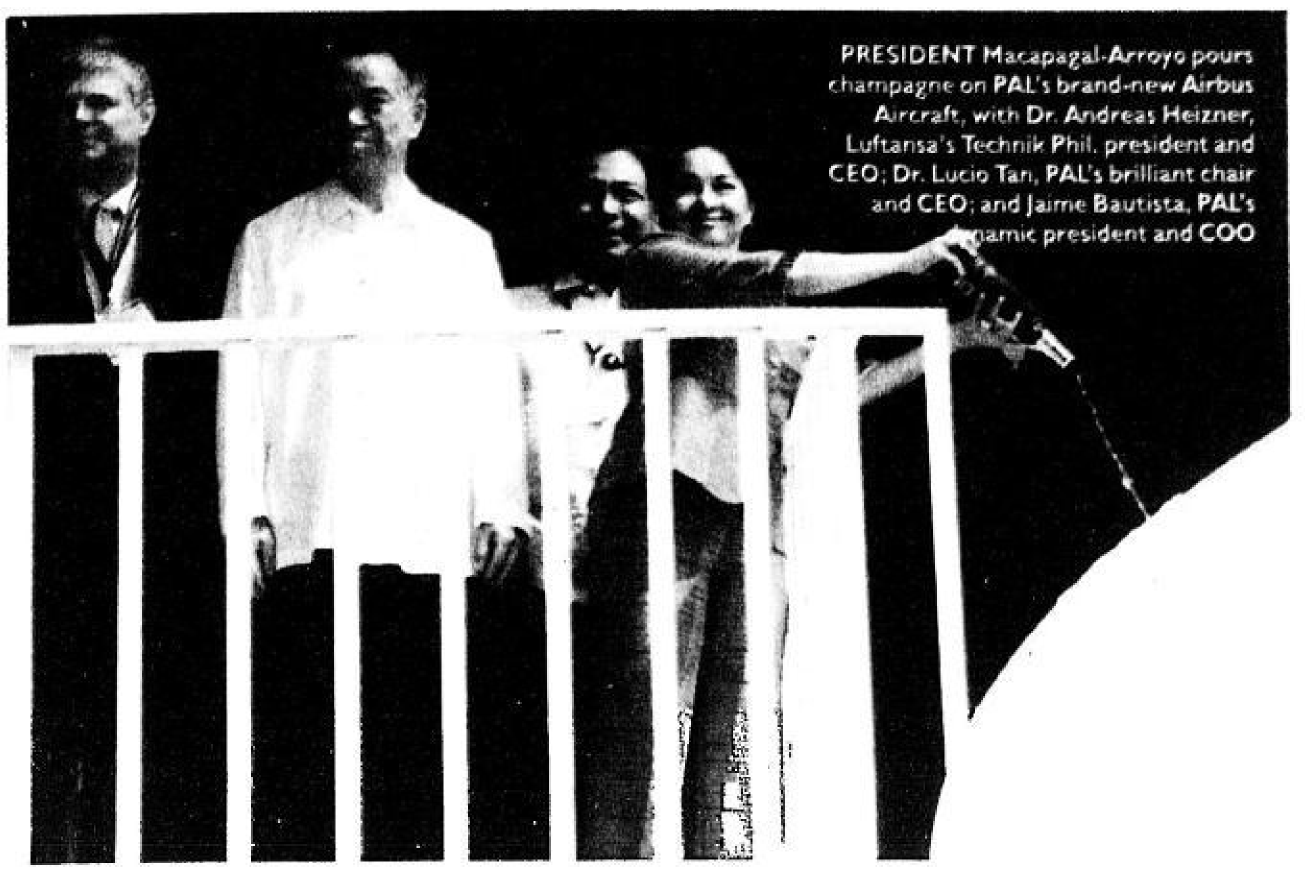
DEBBIE Cuyegkeng of PAL; Chit Juan, Figaro CEO; and Tourism Undersecretary Eduardo Jarque Jr.

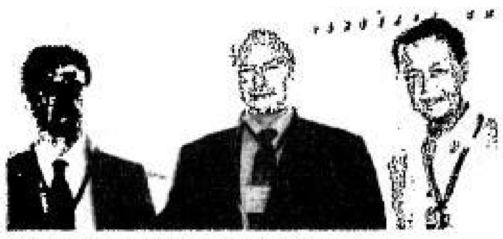
TEDDY Ong, PAL special assistant to the chair and CEO; Delia Merano, PAL SFO, district sales manager; José Mari Chan; and Harry Tan, PAL director

JEAN Marc Raveau, Airbus resident costumer support manager, and Len Battrum, Airbus area sales director


PIERE Briens of BNP Paribas and Laurent Delvart of Calyon Corporate and Investment Bank


RICHARD Lynch, LTP vice president for material management, and Peter Labrie, BNP Paribas corporate head


PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo pours champagne on PAL's brand-new Airbus Aircraft, with Dr. Andreas Heizner, Luftansa's Technik Phil. president and CEO; Dr. Lucio Tan, PAL's brilliant chair and CEO; and Jaime Bautista, PAL's dynamic president and COO


DOMINIQUE Lebastard; French Ambassador to the Philippines Gerard Chesnel; and Henry So Uy of PAL

PAL'S A-319 roll-out working committee. Marilou Mendoza, Bettina de Vera, Cecile Pama, Cherry Jocon, Maver Mayuga, Annabelle Tan-Go, Jennifer Lim-Gan of LTP and Kathy Wu

JESSILYN Tan, Karlu Tan-Say and low-profile Carmen Tan

RONALD Pineda and and designer of the hour, Ivarluski Aseron

MYRNA Fernandez, Mei Mei Bauzon and Alan Vianzon

Flag carrier's spanking new wings

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

IT WAS A GRAND EVENT, *PALANGgas*, when our pal, Philippine Airlines, welcomed the arrival of the first of its 20 brand-new, single-aisle Airbus aircraft with a big bash.

Held in the main hangar of the Lufthansa Technik Philippines in Pasay City, over 700 hotshot VIPs led by **President Macapagal Arroyo**, gathered to witness the cutting-edge amenities of the new PAL aircraft, dahlings.

Jetting in from around the globe were top executives from Airbus, Panasonic Avionics Corp., Recaro Aircraft Seating, and foreign and local financial institutions, plus 200 international travel and cargo agents, who had flown to Cosmo Manille just to attend the happening.

PAL's hottest executives were led by the chair and CEO, Dr. **Lucio C. Tan**, no less; **Harry Tan**; **Estelito Mendoza**, **Gabriel Singson**; **Cesar Santos**; **Michael Tan**; PAL president and COO **Jaime Bautista**; and PAL executive vice president for the commercial group **Henry So Uy**.

Greeted by the fabulous, eye-catching ladies of Mabuhay Miles, the invitees were led into the especially decorated hangar. A grand tent was situated in the middle of the huge space, which served as the main dining area. Colorful PAL and Airbus flags and banners adorned the stage.

Especially eye-catching was the Airbus aircraft itself, situated alongside the stage that had a special platform, where the President conducted the champagne-pouring on the nose of the aircraft signaling the official launch, *palanggas*.

The short but *tres* interesting program included a performance by **José Mari Chan**, plus, PAL's very own superb chorale group.

The event also gave the crowd a preview of the astounding new features of the new fleet, including a 21st-century enhanced cabin (that is notably first for an Asian carrier), and a new coastal-themed interior design that brings to mind the country's picturesque coastline, among others.

Après the program, people flocked to the tent, as coffee from Figaro and hot chocolate from Antonio Pueo poured endlessly and a lavish buffet of hors d'oeuvres and brunch was served by the one-of-a-kind Via Mare, *natch*!

Definitely the affair was one of the many milestones for 2006 as PAL celebrated its 65th year in service with class and style, *palanggas*.

New fashion force

With the recent success of Folded & Hung's holiday fashion event held at the Rockwell Tent, there is no question that the trend-setting brand has definitely become a fashion force to be reckoned with.

The event attended by the Who's Who in the fashion world likewise launched the first collection for F&H of **Ivarluski Aseron**.

Aseron surely impressed fashionistas with his understated elegance and muted sophistication.

M. Barretto, on the other hand, F&H's menswear designer, successfully redefined male sensuality through his designs.

Aseron presented key pieces such as bell-sleeved blouses accented with low necklines paired with slim shorts and leggings, and utilitarian patterns on woven shirts paired with pinstriped slim pants and studded belts. The look was clean, crisp and collected.

Host was the ever-accommodating president of F&H, **Ronald Pineda**, joined by the brand's marketing whiz, **Alan Vianzon**.

Business stalwarts were present: **Joey Concepcion** with wife **Marissa**; **Monchet Olives**; Ayala's **Javi Hernandez** and **Myrna Fernandez**; Samsung's **Pen Roque**; Fresh Look's Dr. **Lai Santiago**; HP's **Jery Dy**; Government Bar's **Henry Lim**; Rastro Bar and Restaurant's **Patty del Rosario**; Shu Uemura's **Xeng Zulueta**; Wade Shoes' **Bogs Lee**; and Alize and Tequila Rose's **Philip Opiasa**.

Divine Lee's dinner

A fabulous fun dinner hosted by that divine miss, statuesque eye-catcher **Divine Lee**, together with her dad, the dashing maverick mega developer **Delfin Lee**, turned out to be a gathering of super cool pals, *palanggas*.

The dinner was to celebrate the company's latest pet project, the awesome multi-billion complex GA Sky Suites, a fab landmark structure that could possibly become the tallest building, the Globe Asiatique.

Naturellement, mega hotshot news anchor **Korina Sanchez** breezed in the earliest, together star manager and corporate image-maker **Joji Dingcong**. With Joji's entry in corporate imaging, my Ilonggo pal is developing a multi-hyphenated career, *n'est ce pas*!

The excellent Pepato dinner was personally prepared by **Margarita Fores**, who made sure every detail was taken care of, from the fantastic floral arrangement to the superb menu—like the fresh Philippine sea bass flown in for the occasion from Roxas City; the yummy *muscovado*-glazed roast duck; and Margarita's specialty, the to die-for lamb shank *osso buco*. The calorific, sinful desserts could have made you swoon with delight, dahlings.

The overflowing bubbly champagne kept the conversation rolling as the dinner guests interviewed Divine and Delfin about the ambitious super mega-structure they are building, set for groundbreaking March next year.

Present were fab couple **Mons Romulo** and her husband **Sander Tantoco**; the one-of-a-kind **Tessa Prieto** in kabuki-inspired garb with husband **Dennis Valdes**; Tatler's editor in chief **Anton San Diego**; my favorite pepperoni, **Pepper Teehankee**; and my super pal, in-demand architect **Anton Mendoza**.

Muy guapito **Kino Cudala** and adorable **Florence Chan** of Globe Asiatique joined the dinner as well. Asian Spirit chair **Noel Onate** completed the *tres* select group.

To Divine and Delfin Lee, the skies are for you to conquer—cheers, *palanggas*!

Italian jeans house

Popular Gas Jeans treated us to a by-invitation-only luncheon at the superb Italian resto of Shangri-La for the exclusive launch of its awesome new Shangri-La Mall store, *palanggas*.

Après the yummy lunch, we were escorted to the unveiling of the brand-new store for the Italian label. We were introduced to the hotshot principals from Gas Far East Ltd. in Hong Kong—**Christine Lam** and **Connie Wu**, *palanggas*.

"Gas Jeans provides relaxed, effortless Italian style with a sensual confidence and is an Italian brand with extraordinary heritage," Lam said.

"Founded by Claudio Grotto and still owned and managed by the Grotto family, it is handled locally by Black Cat Inc. We would also like to announce that Gas will be opening flagship stores in Hong Kong and Florence in the coming year."

Check out Gas Jeans at G/F, Greenbelt 3 (tel. 7574878); 1/F, Rustan's Makati (8133739); and 2/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall (6355659).

RAYMUND Isaac and Joyce Jimenez

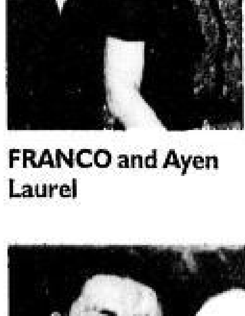
DESIGNER M. Baretto

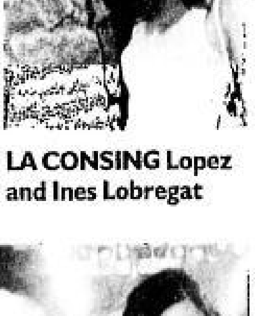
ASIAN Spirit CEO and banker Noel Onate, statuesque eye-catcher Divine Lee, TV's hottest woman of substance Korina Sanchez, Globe Asiatique mega developer Delfin Lee, and Tessa Prieto-Valdes

METRO'S Trish Chua and Luis Espiritu of Allure

OUR very own Maureen Disini of INQUIRER Fashion and Mel Cuevas of Metro

HE LOVES GAS! RJ Ledesma of Manual


FRANCO and Ayen Laurel


LA CONSING Lopez and Ines Lobregat

FAB couple Sander Tantoco and wife Mons Romulo T., Tatler's Anton San Diego, and Pepper Teehankee

ARCHITECT Anton Mendoza and Pepato princess Margarita Araneta Fores

LANCE Raymundo, Lara Morena and Miriam Quiambao

THE GANG OF FIVE. GA's pretty Florence Chan; Divine L.; starmaker Joji Dingcong; and GA's good-looking Kino Cudala; with *moi*

THE HOTSHOTS of Gas Jeans. Lana Lotho, Gas brand manager; Christine Lam of Gas Far East Ltd.; Miguel Celdran of Black Cat Inc.; Connie Wu of Gas Far East Ltd.; Mike Arcenas and Paolo Tuason of Black Cat Inc.; and Peter Pang of Gas Far East, Ltd.

So you're obsessed with being thin

From page D1

other models ate a lot. They needed it to sustain the energy for the daily shows.

What I found interesting was how Anna described the catered meals in each couture house during fashion weeks.

"Models eat. Some of us could eat a lot," she wrote.

She recalled the weeks of fashion collections: "I would jump from tent to tent and check out what was good to eat. I remember Saturdays in Paris, one of the big days because you have such heavy hitters like Montana.

"Being Asian, even though I still had shows to do before Issey Miyake, I would always go to Issey's tent where there was Western food and Asian food because they had bento boxes for the dressers."

After the shows, Anna recalled how their agents would pick up the models in SUVs and vans to cart them to a restaurant "where we'd be seated in a long table of 20 to 30 girls. We'd eat full meals—antipasti, pasta, main course, dessert, wine, after dinner drinks."

Anna defined a beautiful model in a way only she could: "It is absolutely true that a long silhouette looks better for the clothes. It is true that the thinner you are, as a model, the better. However, sickly does not cut it; it becomes unattractive. I think models should understand that they are in the beauty business. Emaciated, skeletal, cadaverous. It does not make them beautiful. It is the elegance, the energy, their projected wellbeing that makes them beautiful.

So take it from Anna Bayle. All the great models ate—from Jerry Hall to Cindy Crawford.

"After all, it is only fashion; it is not something to die for," Anna Bayle said.

Marcy's homecoming

From one New Yorker we go to another: Marcy Halili. Today's *fashionistas* would hardly know Marcy for he left the country more than 30 years ago. We ourselves met this portly, affable man only last month, through Louie Cruz, his friend of 35 years. The last time we saw him was last week at Budji Layug's fun (as usual) but elegant opening of Carlo Magno's exhibit of mixed media paintings, which are something to check out, by the way.

BAYLE says emaciated, skeletal, cadaverous models are not beautiful.

That was the last time, for Marcy died a few days after, in Baguio, while with Candy Cruz on Candy's birthday and Candy's brother Mato, and friend Baboo Mondonedo. He died apparently of heart attack. He was 64.

Marcy worked here in the 1970s with Pierre Cardin, then moved to Germany, and finally to Paris where he became an assistant to Kenzo, when Kenzo was the toast of the fashion world, the first Japanese designer, apart from Hanae Mori, to have won such distinction.

Last July, he came home after a stint in a garment firm in New York, to retire here, and be with his family on Christmas, what would have been his first with them in three decades. He didn't make it to that day.

Last Sunday, Louie, Candy, their friends Mike Rieta and Olive Limpe-Aw took the boat ride on Laguna Bay to Marcy's small village on Talim Island, off Binangonan, Rizal. There, on a stormy afternoon, they joined Marcy's family and the village folk in the long walk to the small cemetery and laid him to rest.

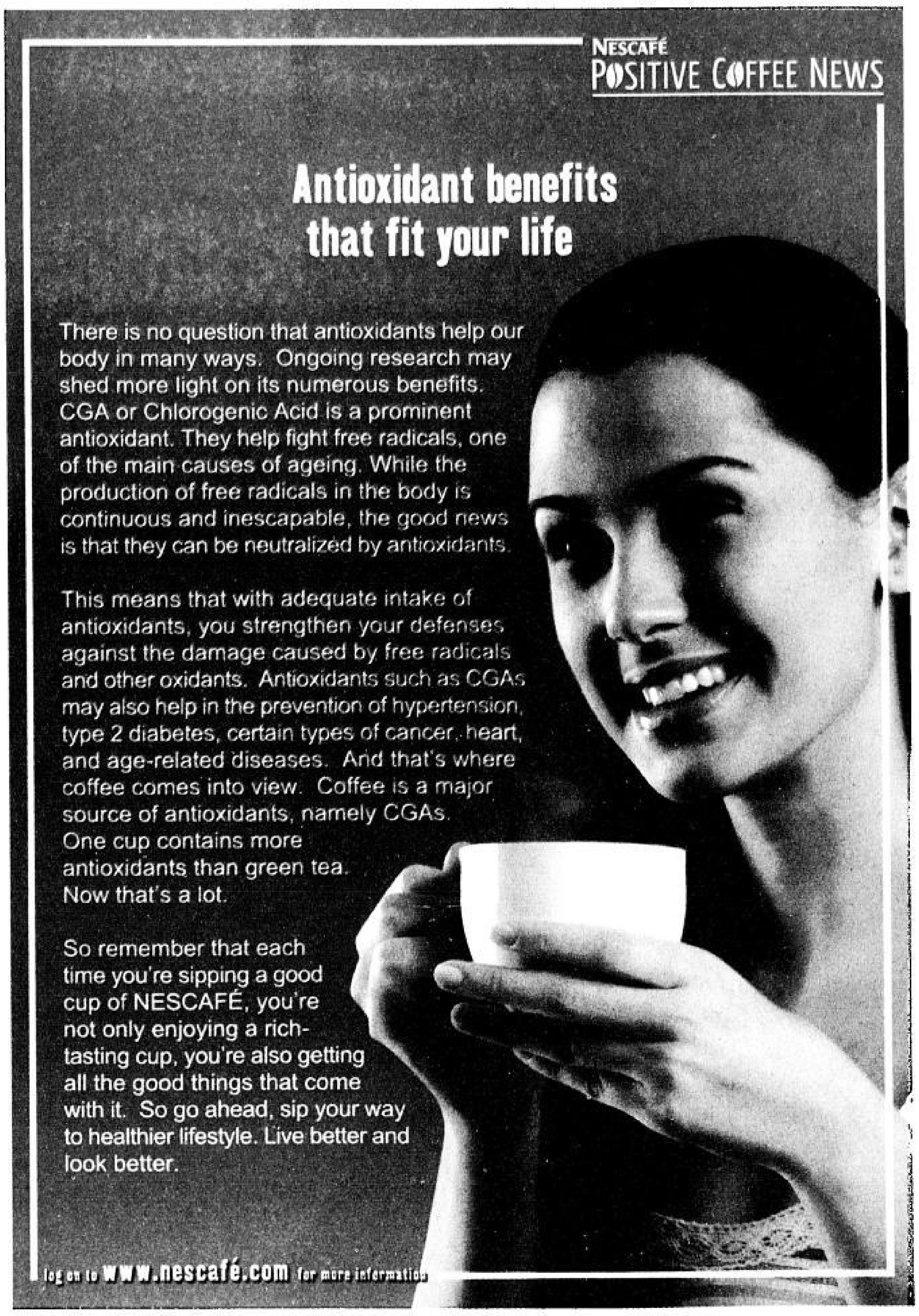
Marcy was finally home.

Vic, the scoop

Guess what Vic Agustin was doing in the presscon on Con-Ass, where he doused water on Renato Constantino Jr.?

He wasn't there for the Con-Ass. He was following up a lead about the sale of the De Venecias' home in Dasmarinas Village (remember the tragic fire) and wanted to ask Gina de Venecia about it.

He was after a scoop. He became the scoop.



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Antioxidant benefits that fit your life

There is no question that antioxidants help our body in many ways. Ongoing research may shed more light on its numerous benefits. CGA or Chlorogenic Acid is a prominent antioxidant. They help fight free radicals, one of the main causes of ageing. While the production of free radicals in the body is continuous and inescapable, the good news is that they can be neutralized by antioxidants.

This means that with adequate intake of antioxidants, you strengthen your defenses against the damage caused by free radicals and other oxidants. Antioxidants such as CGAs may also help in the prevention of hypertension, type 2 diabetes, certain types of cancer, heart, and age-related diseases. And that's where coffee comes into view. Coffee is a major source of antioxidants, namely CGAs. One cup contains more antioxidants than green tea. Now that's a lot.

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Moisturizer with a hint of color

NEW NIVEA VISAGE TINTED Moisturizing Care is a two-in-one product—moisturizer with a hint of color—that effectively evens out your skin tone to give your complexion a fresh, natural radiance while providing your skin the VISAGE moisturizing care and protection it needs all day long.

NIVEA Visage Tinted Moisturizing Care has a comfortably mild, fast-absorbing light texture with a special combination of ultra-fine, light-reflecting color pigments that gives a gentle, long-lasting color. It evens out your skin's natural tone, leaving your complexion with a healthy glow.

Its optimized formula, Hydramine and Vitamins, perfectly supports the skin's natural moisture balance 24 hours a day. This special formula provides your skin optimal moisture and essential caring elements, making it noticeably soft and smooth. For added skin protection, Nivea Visage Tinted Moisturizing Care has the special UVA/UVB protection combined with Vitamin E to shield your skin from the sun's harmful rays.

Nivea Visage Tinted Moisturizing Care is dermatologically approved to be gentle, non-irritating and suitable for all skin types. Choose from two shades—natural and tan—to get the natural, perfect glow you want for your skin.

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Hair and style

HERE'S A HOLLYWOOD HAIR EXPERT WHO can give you easy tips on achieving great style.

Steven Lake has created glam looks for celebrities such as Paris Hilton, Catherine Zeta Jones, Katie Holmes and Renée Zellweger, among others.

"I'm setting the grounds for hair that's modern, with the perfect balance of control and movement," says Lake.

Cream Silk has merged its expertise in hair technology, research and development with Lake's artistic flair and craftsmanship to come up with a complete expert range of leave-on products that style without stiffness and finish without stickiness.

The result of this team-up between Cream Silk's science and Lake's art is the New Flexi-Hold Leave-On Conditioners, a hair care line that gives you style that moves.

"Hairstyles should allow women to express themselves freely with every move. Cream Silk Flexi-Hold Leave-On Conditioners can help do just that," says Lake.

For straighter hair, Instant Straight Serum has Silk Relaxers that straightens and smoothens hair with kinks, giving it a frizz-free finish.

For sleeker hair, the Smooth Defense Crème contains Aloe Sunscreen to shield hair from damage while taming fluffy hair.

For controlled hair, the Extra Control Gel Crème is infused with Amino-Lysine to increase manageability and keep hair intensely nourished.

For fuller hair, Lite Fix Spritzer is enriched with Hydro-Proteins to boost volume and revitalize lifeless hair by infusing weightless conditioning.

STEVEN Lake

MICHELLE Branch

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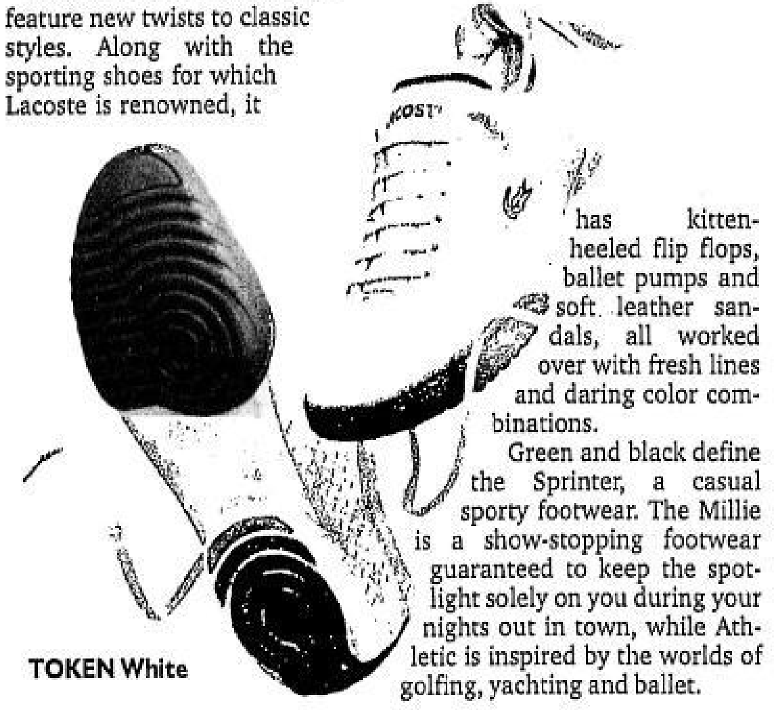
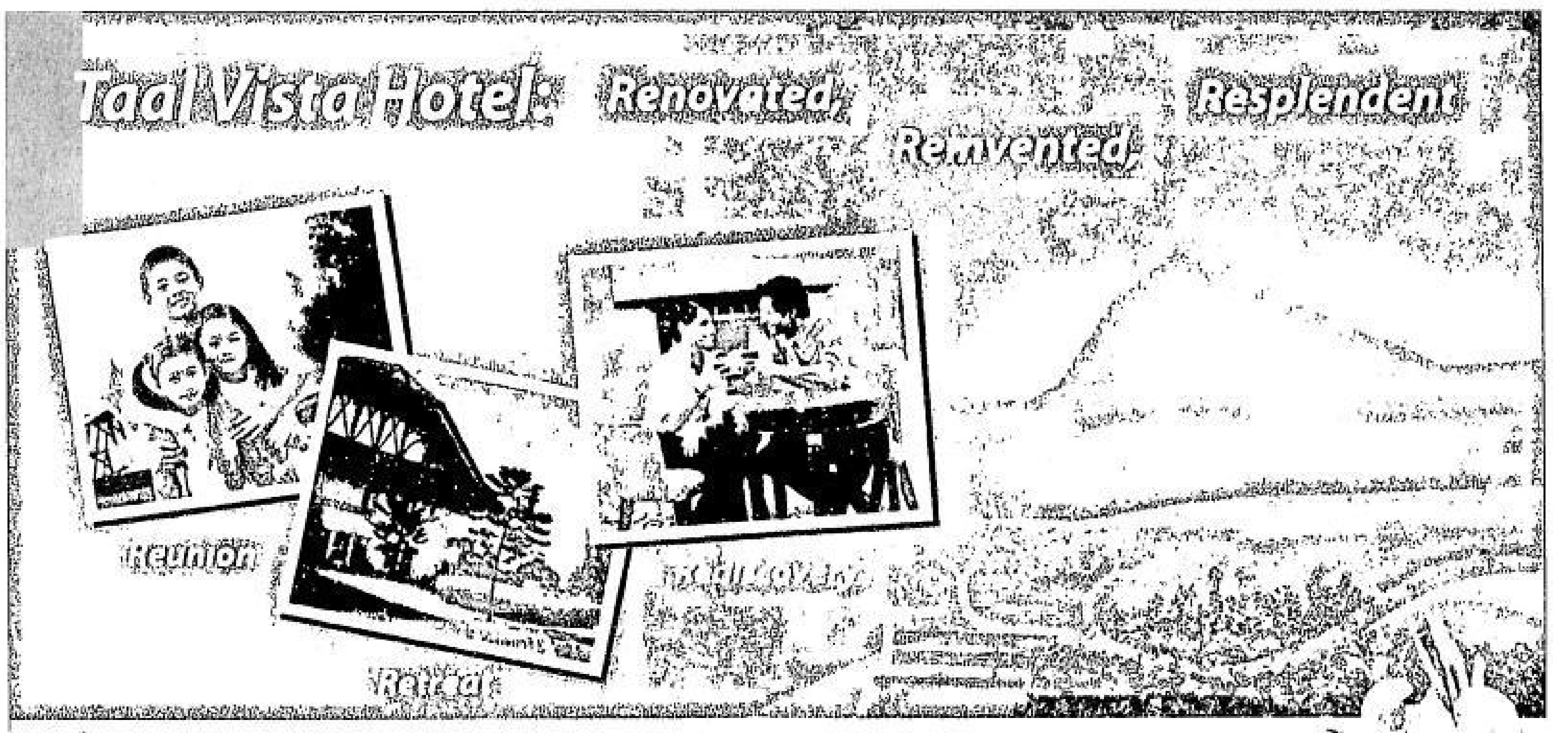


TOKEN White

LACOSTE FOOTWEAR'S FALL 2006 collection offers slim silhouettes that have the perfect mix of comfort and elegance for your feet, so you're relaxed even when dressed, and dressed even when relaxing.

Lacoste's three collections feature new twists to classic styles. Along with the sporting shoes for which Lacoste is renowned, it has kitten-heeled flip flops, ballet pumps and soft leather sandals, all worked over with fresh lines and daring color combinations.

Green and black define the Sprinter, a casual sporty footwear. The Millie is a show-stopping footwear guaranteed to keep the spotlight solely on you during your nights out in town, while Athletic is inspired by the worlds of golfing, yachting and ballet.



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DTI-NCR Permit no. A3-0906. Series of 2006.

Dazzle and shine with the right outfit

PARFAIT spaghetti-strap dress, Mario D' Boro slip-ons, RDS teal headband

ROBINSON'S DEPARTMENT Store (RDS) offers some ideas to help you dazzle, sparkle and shine during the holidays.

A printed tunic dress and slip-ons over black tights will make you look slim for dinner with your boyfriend and his family.

For the office Christmas party, leggings with a scarlet trench coat and a wide white leather belt, plus platforms and right accessories, may just be what you need. Or go for a ruffled or pleated mini skirt topped with pull-on tunics, knitted chic cardigan or vest over plain tees.

Party with the gang by layering the right pieces. Go preppy in shorts, mid-sleeve plain blouse and suspenders or opt for colorful or embellished topper coats, slim-fit denims, red bolero or mini vest over puff-sleeved tee.

For the family reunion, try a denim mini skirt and black tights topped with cropped green blazer and silky headband. Another possibility is a '50s cocktail dress or pleated skirt, with a lacy sleeveless top and a mini-vest matched with high-heeled slip-ons.

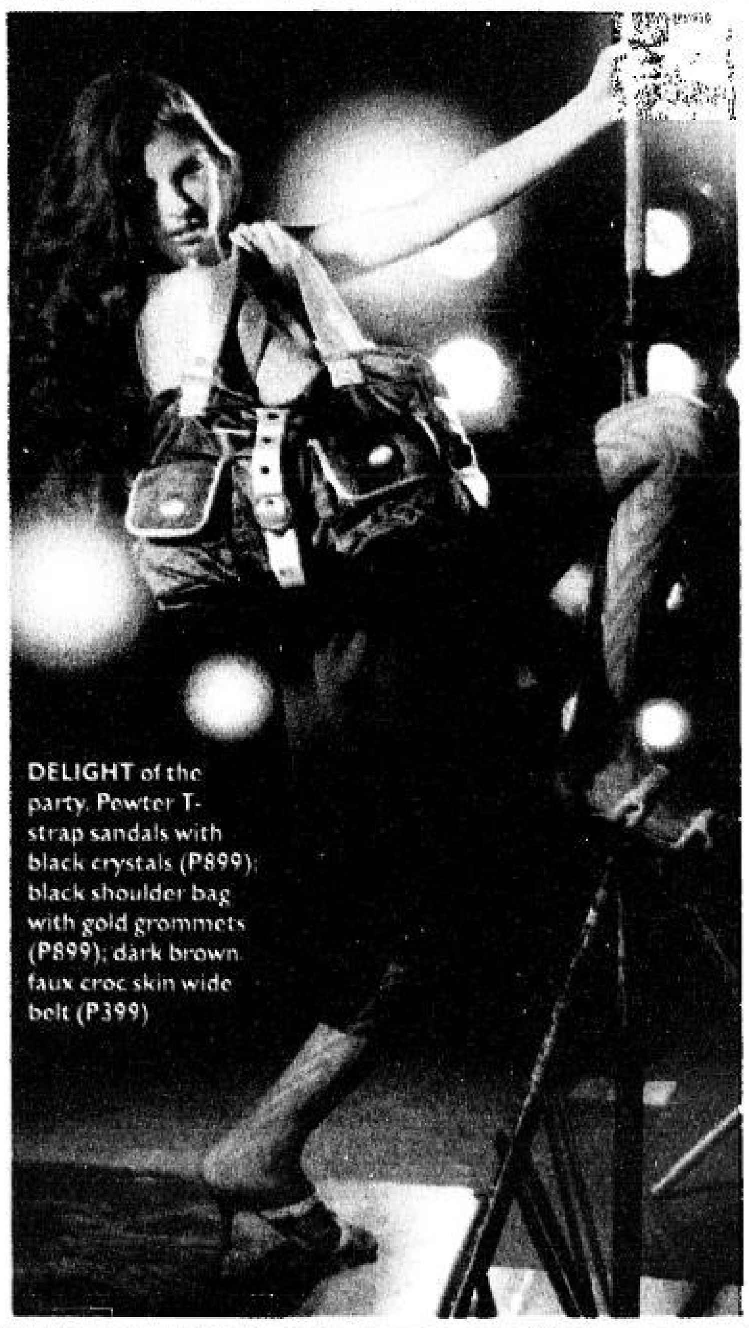
RDS keeps a wide assortment of both classic and trendy items at reasonable prices to suit any occasion during the holiday season, so visit the RDS branch nearest you.

Robinson's Department Store branches are located in Robinson's malls, Waltermart malls, Tutuban Center, Metropolis Star and Festival Mall in Alabang; Nepo Mall Pampanga, Dagupan and Pangasinan; and Limketkai Mall, Cagayan de Oro. Visit www.rds.com.ph.

CANDY-PINK and brown tunic, Darlington black tights, RDS headband and long necklace

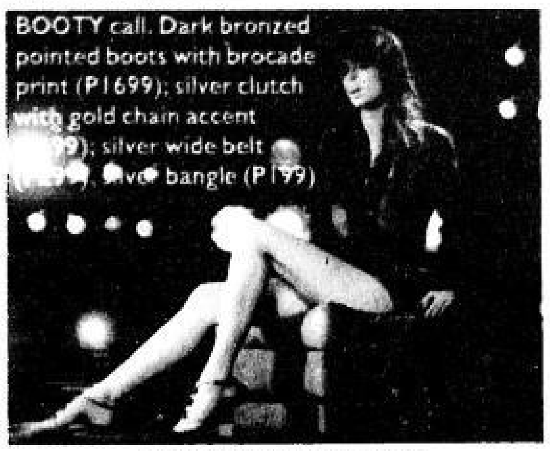
CANDY-RED trench coat, Fab black leggings, Donn Lyssa white belt, Jada black and gold platforms, RDS white headband and long necklace

Bling footwear



DELIGHT of the party. Pewter T-strap sandals with black crystals (P899); black shoulder bag with gold grommets (P899); dark brown faux croc skin wide belt (P399)

SWING into the holiday beat. Black tote with gold trim and handle (P9[illegible]); gold rope-strapped [illegible]els (P899)



BOOTY call. Dark bronzed pointed boots with brocade print (P1699); silver clutch with gold chain accent (P[illegible]99); silver wide belt (P[illegible]); silver bangle (P199)

SHOES, BAGS & ACCESSORIES BY: WADE
PHOTOGRAPHED BY: KEN GO
ART DIRECTION & DIGITAL POST PRODUCTION BY:
MIKE DE GUZMAN (MGP)
FASHION STYLING BY: GEORGE PALMIANO (MGP)
HAIR & MAKEUP BY: RED LOPEZ (HAIRBYTES SALON EASTWOOD),
ASSISTED BY MARIFE FORTUNO
MODEL: GISELLI VIDOTTO (T-MODELS)
CLOTHES BY: FOLDED&HUNG

THE NEED TO SHINE IS EVIDENT IN WADE'S current collection, with its metallic sandals, platforms and bags. Some footwear also come with golden rope straps, crystal embellishments and studs.

Pointy pumps in stilettos are either in patent or textured leather. Faux croc and snakeskin materials are also present from shoes to bags. Knee-high boots make a comeback, but Wade creates its own version this time, with boots decked in bronzed python skin or brocade print.

Accessories include gold and silver dangling earrings and wide belts in metallic or croc skin.

Wade is located at the 3rd Level, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center; Ground Level, Padre Faura Wing, Robinson's Place Manila; 3rd Level, East Wing, Robinson's Galleria; 2nd Floor Bldg. A, SM Megamall; 2nd Floor, Annex Bldg., SM City North EDSA; 4th Level, The Block, SM City North EDSA; Ground Level, Main Mall, SM Mall of Asia; Ground Floor, SM City Clark, Pampanga; The Shops, Unimart, Greenhills; Ground Floor, Alimall, Araneta Center; Ground Floor, Gaisano Mall of Davao.

SNAKE charmer. White python-skin tote with silver print and handle (P899); white pointed snakeskin pumps (P1299); multi-colored metal bangles (P189 each); stainless metal droop earrings (P199)

Executive dressing

THE TOTAL corporate look of Wall Street

SINCE 1985, WALL Street has provided business dressing for the corporate male, offering a complete line of executive apparel.

Its crisp cotton dress shirts come in the latest colors and styles, along with slacks, suits, a wide variety of neckties and even office *barongs* to spruce up every business executive.

Wall Street is available at SM, Robinson's, The Landmark and other stores in key cities.

WALL Street business clothes combine fashipn and function.

Leaf's Holiday fashion

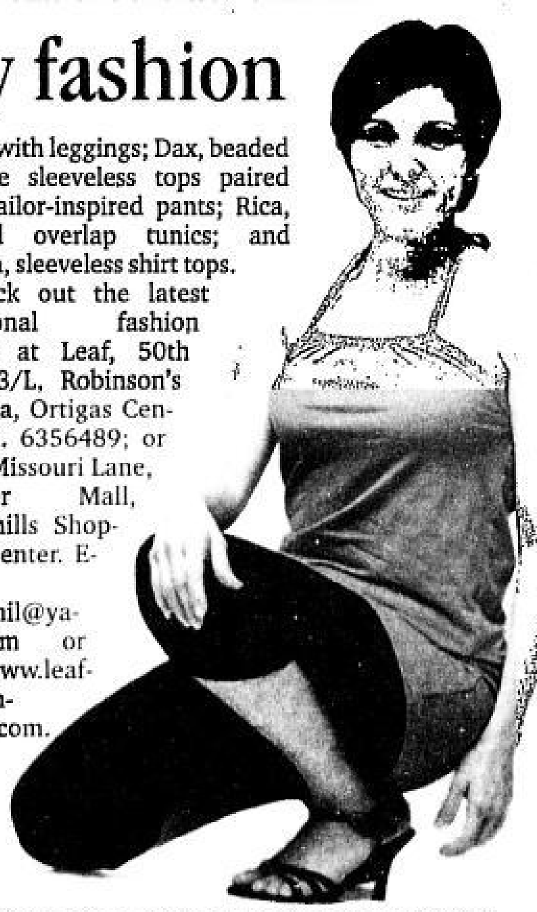
LEAF IS THE BRAND NAME OF A line of ready-to-wear fashion merchandise created by three imaginative and creative young women in September 2004: Trina Franco-Molina, Cecile Capistrano-Poblador and Dixie Lynn Chua.

Leaf began by offering knitted T-shirts individually hand-embellished with specialty ribbons, buttons, patches, cord, sequins, beads and other materials.

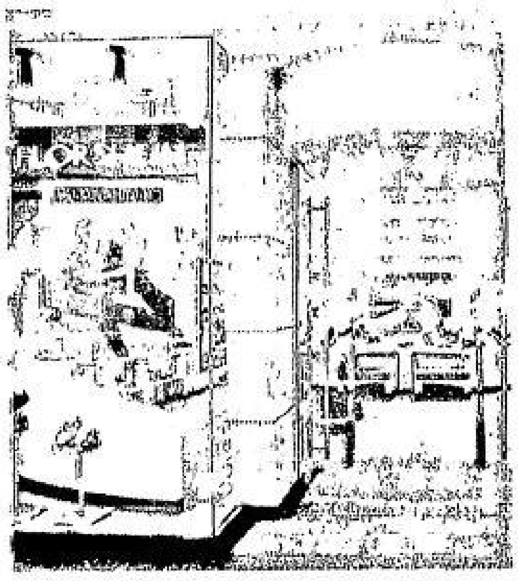
Today, Leaf has two free-standing stores in Metro Manila (at 50th Avenue, 3/L, Robinson's Galleria; and 35 Missouri Lane, Theater Mall, Greenhills Shopping Center) and is distributed in Cebu City and Bacolod City. Its merchandise now consists of 60-percent knitted tops, 30-percent woven tops and bottoms and 10-percent footwear, mostly geared to the young adults and stylish women who are its consistent clientele.

The fashion labels include Pauline, polo dresses with adjustable sleeves; Hannah, halter tunics with leggings; Dax, beaded keyhole sleeveless tops paired with sailor-inspired pants; Rica, beaded overlap tunics; and Pamela, sleeveless shirt tops.

Check out the latest functional fashion trends at Leaf, 50th Ave., 3/L, Robinson's Galleria, Ortigas Center, tel. 6356489; or at 35 Missouri Lane, Theater Mall, Greenhills Shopping Center. E-mail leaf_phil@yahoo.com or visit www.leaf-fashion-house.com.



ACTRESS Jackie Lou Blanco wearing Hannah halter tunics with leggings



Classy, trendy, fashionable footwear

FINDING THE PERFECT OUTFIT FOR PARTYing this season means having the right pair of shoes.

If you are a woman, the J.Lo Collection may be the thing for you when you are opting for class and glitz. The beaded front panels with colorful detail and metal center studs of Aztec will surely complement the sparkling look.

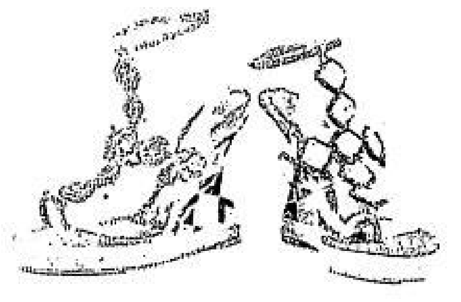
Athena Alexander's Bodie will also go well with the glimmer and shine with its stunning jewel details. Trinity has sequin-adorned upper.

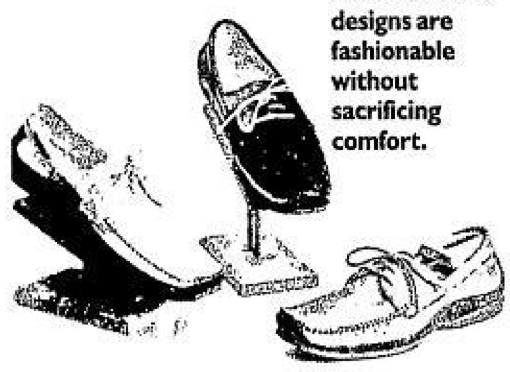
Of course, you can never go wrong with the classic shoe design. Lifestride's Chapter, Comment, Casey, Memory and Chipper will be suitable for any attire when elegance is what you are aiming for. Also providing a wide range of classic designs to choose from is Natularizer. Mockery has muted embellishments while Prizzy has a metallic touch.

No need to despair if you are man. There is almost as wide a selection available to you. Florsheim's classic leather designs will surely go anywhere this season.

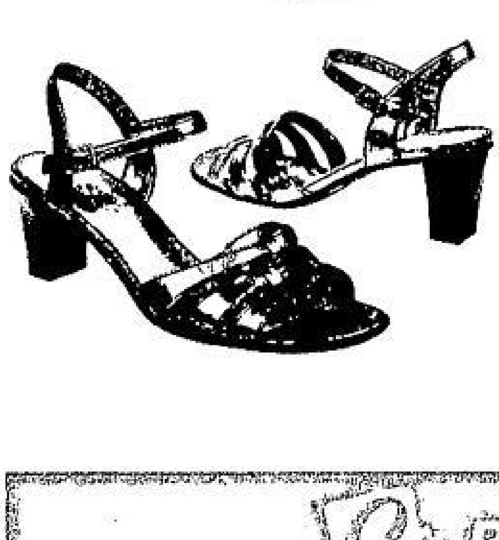
The designs are fashionable without sacrificing comfort. This is also what Athena Alexander Shoes aim for—trendy but feet-friendly.

The shoes are exclusively distributed by Retail Specialist, Inc. and are available at shops located in Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center; Glorietta 3, Ayala Center; Shangri-La Plaza Mall; Megamall; Commerce Mall, Alabang Town Center; Pedro Gil Wing, Robinson's Place Manila; Gateway Mall, Araneta Center Cubao; SM Mall of Asia; SM Cagayan de Oro; SM City Davao; SM City Cebu and Ayala Center Cebu (032) 2317361; Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati.





FLORSHEIM'S designs are fashionable without sacrificing comfort.



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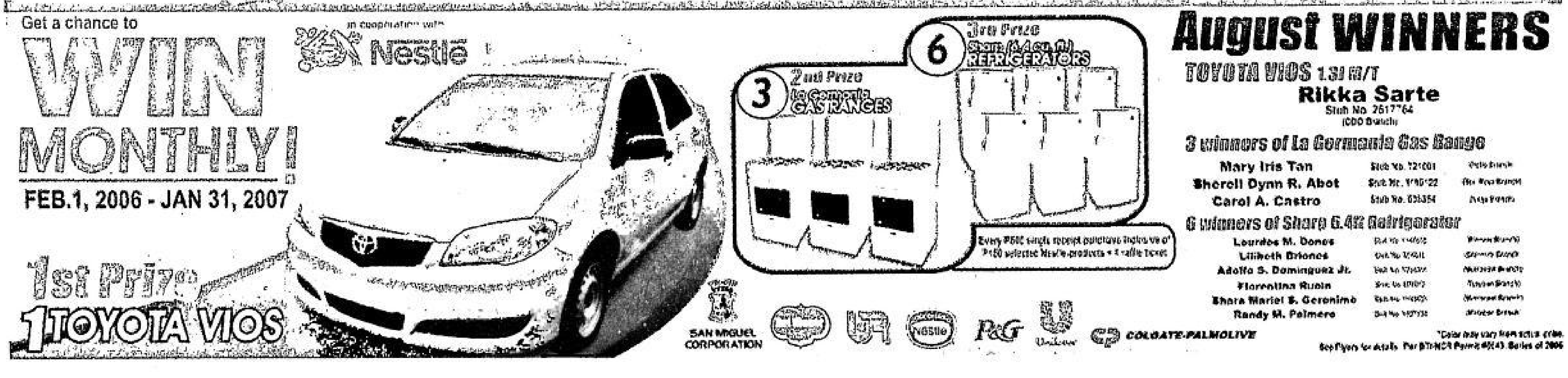
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4096 Series of 2006



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Lilibeth Briones	[illegible]	[illegible]
Adolfo S. Dominguez Jr.	[illegible]	[illegible]
Florentina Rubin	[illegible]	[illegible]
Shara Mariel S. Geronimo	[illegible]	[illegible]
Randy M. Palmero	[illegible]	[illegible]

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See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit #[illegible] Series of 2006

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See flyers for details. Per DTI NCR Permit #4532, series of 2006.

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GOINGS-ON

Christmas carols at the mall

CAROLERS FROM DIFFERENT SCHOOLS WILL serenade mall-goers this December at the main lobby of SM Mall of Asia. The San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra will perform Dec. 15-17. Also scheduled to perform are the UST High School Chorale, Dec. 20; St. Scholastica's College Chorale, Dec. 21; the Asia Pacific College Chorale, Dec. 23; and Coro Techniv of TUP in Cavite, Dec. 24. The Spanish Embassy holds a Spanish Christmas Festival and Bazaar at the Music Hall, Dec. 15-17. The fair will showcase gifts, food, wines and fashion shows. A Holiday fashion show by Mango will be held 6 p.m., Dec. 16.

PERFORMANCE. The Pandacan Community Band, with conductor Reynato Resurreccion and assistant conductor Dennic Morales, will perform at the "Concert at the Park" Dec. 17. Admission is free. Call 3027374.

HOMECOMING. Classes '81 and '56 of the College of the Holy Spirit, Tarlac will host a grand alumni homecoming Dec. 30 at the College of the Holy Spirit, San Sebastian, Tarlac City. Call 0920-9450206 or 0917-8575970.

KOREAN LANGUAGE COURSE. The Department of Tourism is offering a Basic Korean Language Course 6-9 p.m., Monday-Friday, Jan. 9-March 9. Registration, which ends today, is held at the Standards Development Division, Room 203, DOT Bldg., T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila. Call 5257980/5361128/5238411 local 182 and 176.

DOUBLE YOUR REWARD. American Express Peso Platinum Credit Card holders have up to Dec. 31 to earn twice as many reward points for every P45 spent in some 20 establishments. Promo participants include Apple Center, Hans Brumann, Prestige Cars BMW, Samsonite, Paul Smith, Bizu, Chronos, Escada, Escada Sport, Kérastase Institute, Kuretake, Laurel, Nike Forum, Nike Women, Patio Pacific Boracay, Sleepcare, St. John, Tsumura and Urban Spa.

TEA SET CONTEST. Deadline for submissions of entries to the first ever tea set competition is Dec. 31. Winners in the contest, a project of the Putik Association of Philippine Potters, will get cash prizes: P20,000, 1st place; P12,000, second; and P8,000, third. Three entries will get honorable mention awards and P5,000 cash. A tea set exhibition and the competition will be held late January at the InterContinental Hotel Manila Lobby at the Ayala Center in Makati. Date to be announced later. A tea set must consist of a tea pot and at least two cups. A submission fee of P200 per entry will be charged. Call The Pottery Workshop at 7292980 or e-mail jonnyputik@yahoo.com.

THE ZONTA Club of Manila Foundation held a fundraising dinner-dance, "Love Bouquet," in honor of its past president and area director Nonie Basilio at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel. Proceeds of the event will support the construction of a livelihood center at Zonta Manila's GK-Zontaville, a 46-unit, three-story structure in Brgy. Plainview, Mandaluyong. Members of the organizing committee are (front row) Menchu Pascual, Lulu Castañeda, Diana Franco and Fely Umandap; (second row) president Gina Geraldez, Basilio and chair Baby Perez-Sison; (third row) Nida Lopez, Letty Calma, Cynthia Cruz, Evangeline Dumlao, Baby de Jesus and Sol Dizon.

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BEAUTY

Contributing editor
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LYCHEE day cream
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SUN kissed /F2

NEW makeup /F2

GIFT ideas /F4

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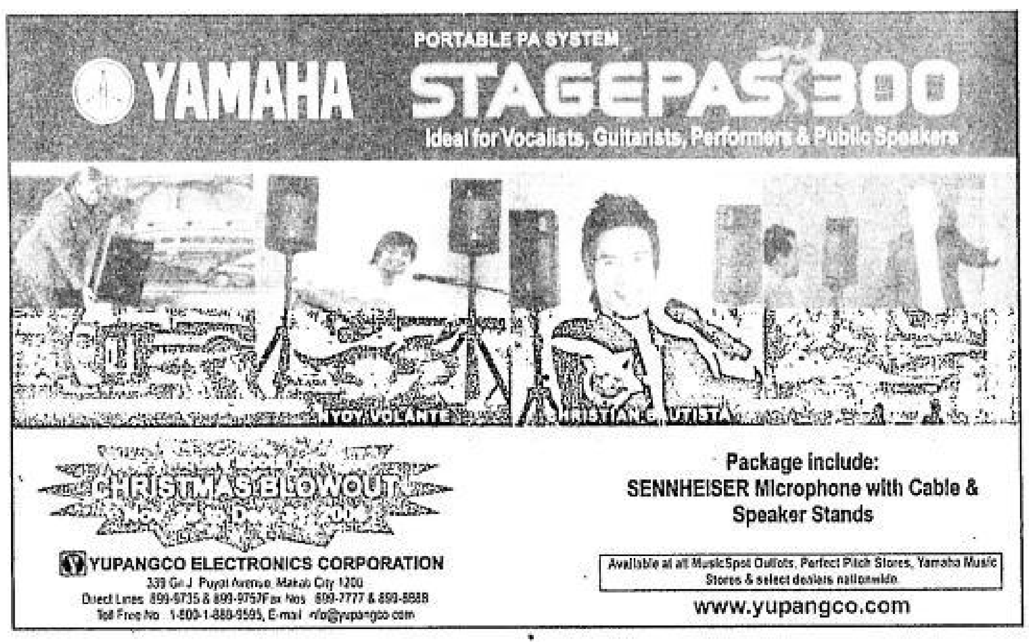
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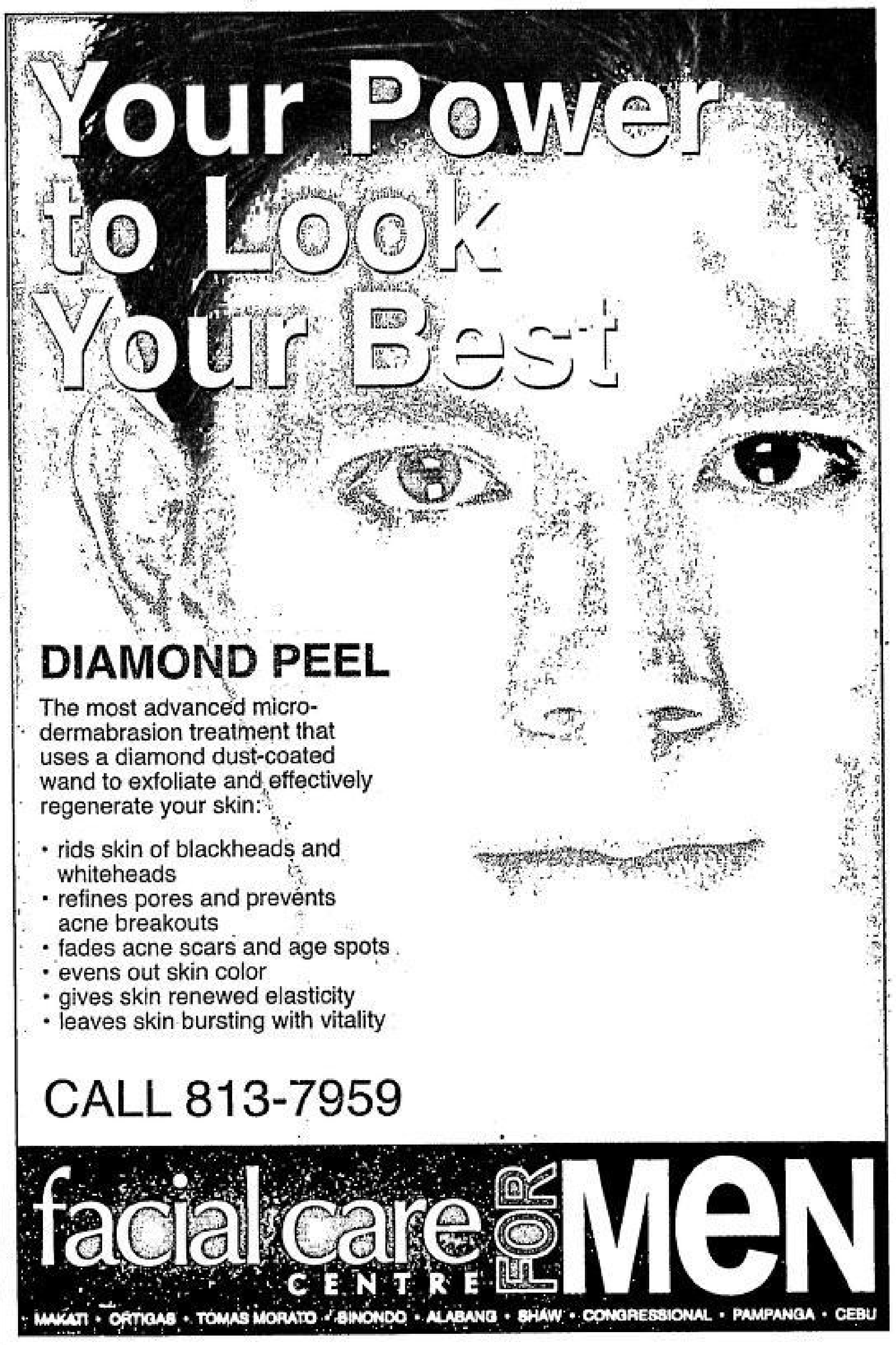
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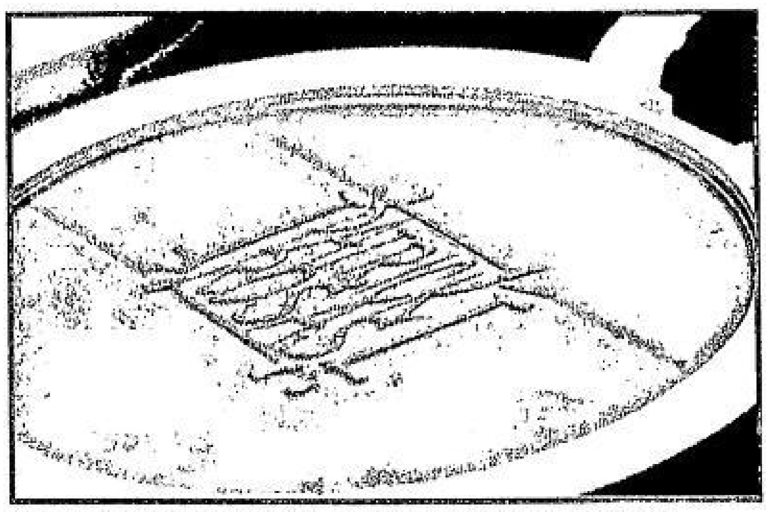
Makeup by Patrick Rosas —anytime, anywhere

The ace makeup artist launches his very own cosmetics line

PATRICK ROSAS
g-lish


THE MAKEUP logo, embossed on the palette, was created by clothing designer James Reyes.

AT THE LAUNCH. Rosas is flanked by (from left) business partners Vanessa Chungunco, Charlene Kang and Nikki Ng, and loyal client Gretchen Barretto.

By Cheche V. Moral

THINGS ARE COMING UP roses once more for Patrick Rosas.

A few days ago, the makeup artist launched the first collection of his very own makeup line. Typical of Rosas, the event was low-key, even as it was attended by some of his most loyal A-list clients from high society and the entertainment business.

"I'm thrilled, of course, especially as I'm the first of my generation [of Filipino makeup artists] to have his own makeup line," he said. "But you know me, I like to keep things quiet and simple." (He had, however, tipped the INQUIRER of the launch several months earlier.)

Collaboration

Patrick Rosas the makeup line is a creative collaboration between the artist and some of his friends in the industry. It was the London-based Filipino designer Lesley Mobo who suggested a sleek look, so the collection's blushes and eye makeups come in slim white compacts. The designer James Reyes designed Rosas' logo, in red oriental-ish script, emblazoned against the white compacts and embossed on the red faux snakeskin collector's edition box (red and white, Rosas said, are his lucky colors).

Longtime friend and collaborator Inno Sotto created the design of the poster, an illustration of an Oriental girl. Model turned photographer Joann Bitagcol shot the promotional images, while designers Jojie Lloren and Dennis Lustico also gave their creative inputs. Clients like Bea Valdes and Irene Marcos-Araneta also gave their ideas, the latter suggesting that Rosas ask a Japanese firm to concoct his foundation makeups in the future.

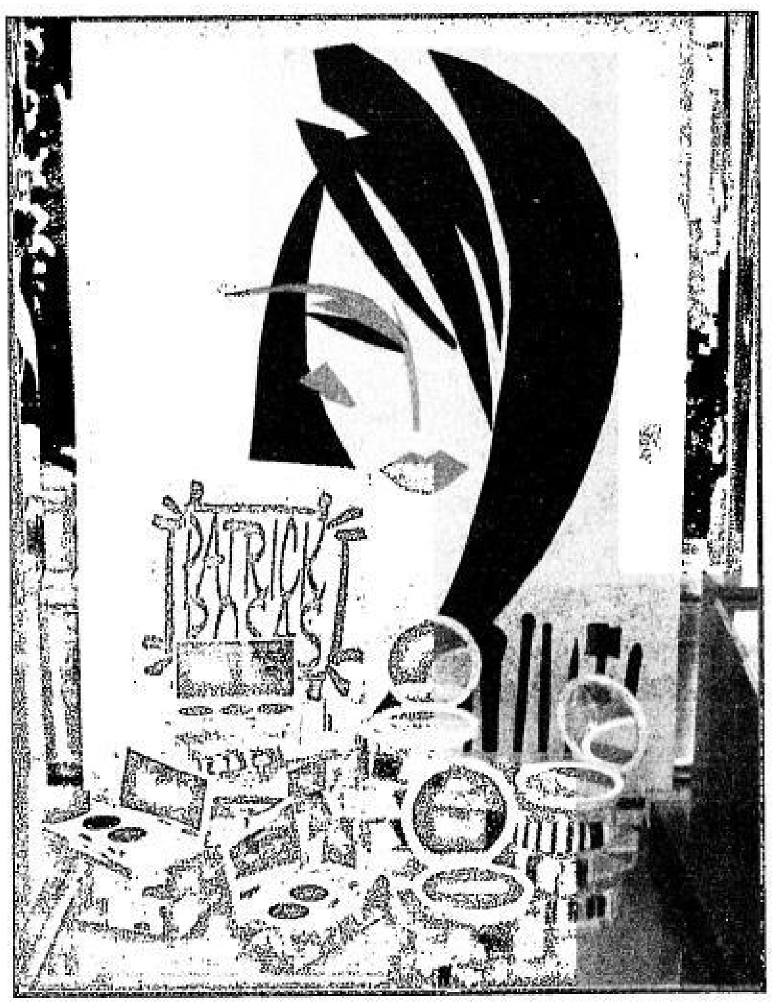
Creating the makeups themselves proved to be the most challenging part for Rosas. It was real hard work, he rued, though the eventual results were quite satisfactory. While the makeup was developed for him by an Asian laboratory that also makes cosmetics for some popular international brands, Rosas, who is accustomed to using top-of-the-line makeup brands, admitted the first few samples didn't meet his standards.

'Grade A' makeup

"I had to be very fussy since these would bear my name," he said. "I didn't want to compromise." The final products, he guaranteed, are up to his standards—Grade A, hypoallergenic cosmetics with a high level of pigmentation.

When three young women entrepreneurs approached Rosas with the idea of creating his own makeup line seven months ago, he said yes, but it was a half-hearted commitment.

"I get approached with these business proposals," he explained, "but I always had reservations. I knew it was hard work, and I only wanted to do what I was doing."



PATRICK Rosas the makeup's promotional poster illustration was created by the makeup artist's friend, designer Inno Sotto.

But the women's persistence swayed him eventually. G-Lish, owned by friends Nikki Ng, Charlene Kang and Vanessa Chungunco, last year introduced a makeup line for the young and trendy market. It was Ng who broached the idea of a more sophisticated line that would bear Rosas' name, impressed as she was by the latter's job during her sister's wedding.

No Rule collection

The initial Patrick Rosas collection comprises three blushes, three lip glosses and three eye shadow trios. The artist calls it his No Rule collection as the palettes are non-trendy classics that will suit the Filipina's *morena* skin and also the Chinese and Caucasian's fairer skin tones.

"I don't have a fixed style," Rosas explained, "so the makeup I have created is a reflection of this. I can go from the no-makeup look to couture glam. And the palettes here are just what you need. It's just a matter of blending to create your desired look."

He opted for a streamlined collection, said Rosas, because "I didn't want to go overboard by creating so much, as I didn't want to put my business partners in a bind. I wanted to see how the market would respond first."

His launch at Essenses in Rustan's Makati reportedly made record first-day sales for any makeup brand; Essenses is the exclusive retailer of the line. Encouraged, he's now preparing for his sophomore collection to launch first quarter of 2007.

The makeup retails at P700 (blush-on), P500 (eye shadow trio) and P300 (lip gloss). Rosas said this is a chance for more Filipinas who couldn't afford his personal services—a minimum of five figures—to experience the Patrick Rosas magic.

Rosas said he only had three professional goals: to come up with a book documenting his works, to create his own makeup line, and to have a school where he could teach makeup techniques to Filipinos.

Many Filipinas, he explained, still have a lot of room to improve on when it comes to makeup.

"You need to educate them, to teach them how to experiment. Some are misguided that's why they stick to the same look. The approach should be realistic," he noted.

"When I was preparing for my first [coffee-table] book"—he has published two best-sellers, called "Images" and "Muse"—"nobody wanted to model for me because they thought I was just doing it on a whim. When the first was a success, everyone wanted to be part of the second book...

"Now, there are some who come up to me and say I should've gone to them for the makeup project!" he said, rolling his eyes skyward. "But I'm really happy that I've created so many good relationships throughout the course of my career."

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By Carla Sibal
Contributor

AN IDYLLIC GET-AWAY IS JUST a whiff away—thanks to the brainchild of Tracie Dizon, a self-possessed tropical aficionado.

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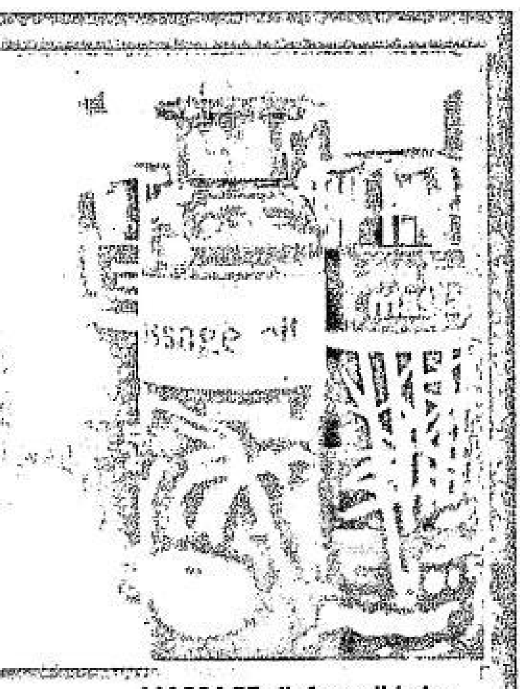
TRAVEL ready goodies

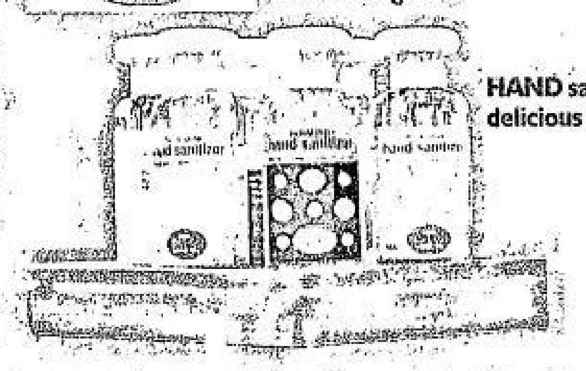
RICE bran oil moisturizing facial wash

day cream
eye cream
night cream

COFFEE for the skin

FRUITY regimen


MASSAGE oils for well-being



HAND sanitizers in delicious scents

SCENTS from the earth

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Makeup by Patrick Rosas —anytime, anywhere

By Cheche V. Moral

The ace makeup artist launches his very own cosmetics line

PATRICK ROSAS
g-lish

THINGS ARE COMING UP roses once more for Patrick Rosas.

A few days ago, the makeup artist launched the first collection of his very own makeup line. Typical of Rosas, the event was low-key, even as it was attended by some of his most loyal A-list clients from high society and the entertainment business.

"I'm thrilled, of course, especially as I'm the first of my generation [of Filipino makeup artists] to have his own makeup line," he said. "But you know me, I like to keep things quiet and simple." (He had, however, tipped the INQUIRER of the launch several months earlier.)

Collaboration

Patrick Rosas the makeup line is a creative collaboration between the artist and some of his friends in the industry. It was the London-based Filipino designer Lesley Mobo who suggested a sleek look, so the collection's blushes and eye makeups come in slim white compacts. The designer James Reyes designed Rosas' logo, in red oriental-ish script, emblazoned against the white compacts and embossed on the red faux snakeskin collector's edition box (red and white, Rosas said, are his lucky colors).

Longtime friend and collaborator Inno Sotto created the design of the poster, an illustration of an Oriental girl. Model turned photographer Joann Bitagcol shot the promotional images, while designers Jojie Lloren and Dennis Lustico also gave their creative inputs. Clients like Bea Valdes and Irene Marcos-Araneta also gave their ideas, the latter suggesting that Rosas ask a Japanese firm to concoct his foundation makeups in the future.

Creating the makeups themselves proved to be the most challenging part for Rosas. It was real hard work, he rued, though the eventual results were quite satisfactory. While the makeup was developed for him by an Asian laboratory that also makes cosmetics for some popular international brands, Rosas, who is accustomed to using top-of-the-line makeup brands, admitted the first few samples didn't meet his standards.

'Grade A' makeup

"I had to be very fussy since thes would bear my name," he said. "I didn't want to compromise." The final products, he guaranteed, are up to his standards—Grade A, hypoallergenic cosmetics with a high level of pigmentation.

When three young women entrepreneurs approached Rosas with the idea of creating his own makeup line even months ago, he said yes, but it was half-hearted commitment.

"I get approached [illegible] business proposals," he explained, "but I always had reservations. I knew it was hard work, and I only wanted to do what I was doing."

But the women's persistence swayed him eventually. G-Lish, owned by friends Nikki Ng, Charlene Kang and Vanessa Chungunco, last year introduced a makeup line for the young and trendy market. It was [illegible] who broached the idea of a more sophistica[illegible] line that would bear Rosas' name, impressed as she was by the latte[illegible] job du[illegible] wedding.

No Rule collection

The initi[illegible] Patri[illegible] Ros[illegible] prises three blushe[illegible] three[illegible] three eye shadow[illegible] The [illegible] No Rule collection [illegible] the palettes are non-trendy classics that will [illegible] Filipina's *morena* skin and also the Chines[illegible] Caucasian's fairer skin tones

"I don't have a fixed [illegible]," Ro[illegible] plained, "so the makeup I have created is a reflection of this. I can go from the no-makeup look to coutur[illegible] And [illegible] are just what [illegible] blending to create[illegible]

He opted fo[illegible] Rosas, becaus[illegible] I di[illegible] va[illegible] board by creati[illegible] I did[illegible] to put my busine[illegible] parti[illegible] bind[illegible] ed to see how [illegible] first."

His launcl[illegible] Mak[illegible] reportedly made record [illegible] la[illegible] any makeup brand: Essense [illegible] the excl[illegible] re tailer of the line. Encouraged, he's now preparing for his sophomore collection to launch first quarter of 2007.

The makeup retails at P700 (blush-on), P500 (eye shadow trio) and P300 (lip gloss). Rosas said this is a chance for more Filipinas who couldn't afford his personal services—a minimum of five figures—to experience the Patrick Rosas magic.

Rosas said he only had three professional goals: to come up with a book documenting his works, to create his own makeup line, and to have a school where he could teach makeup techniques to Filipinos.

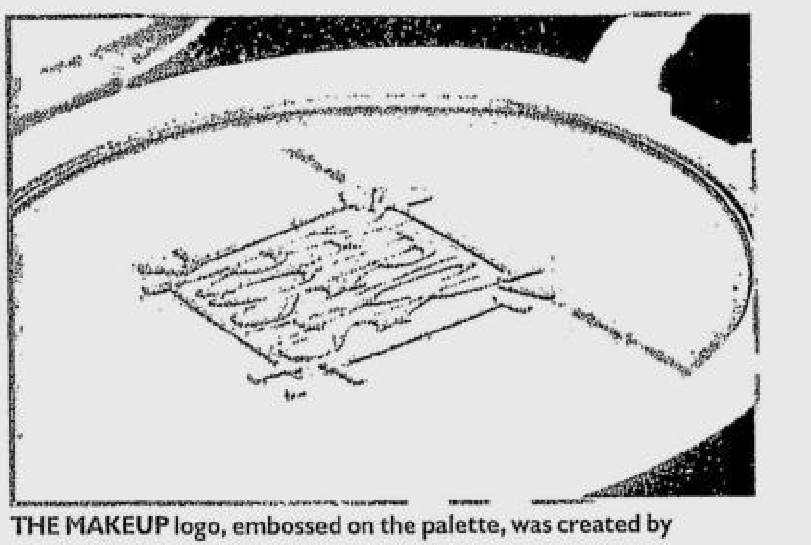
Many Filipinas, he explained, still have a lot of room to improve on when it comes to makeup.

"You need to educate them, to teach them how to experiment. Some are misguided that's why they stick to the same look. The approach should be realistic," he noted.

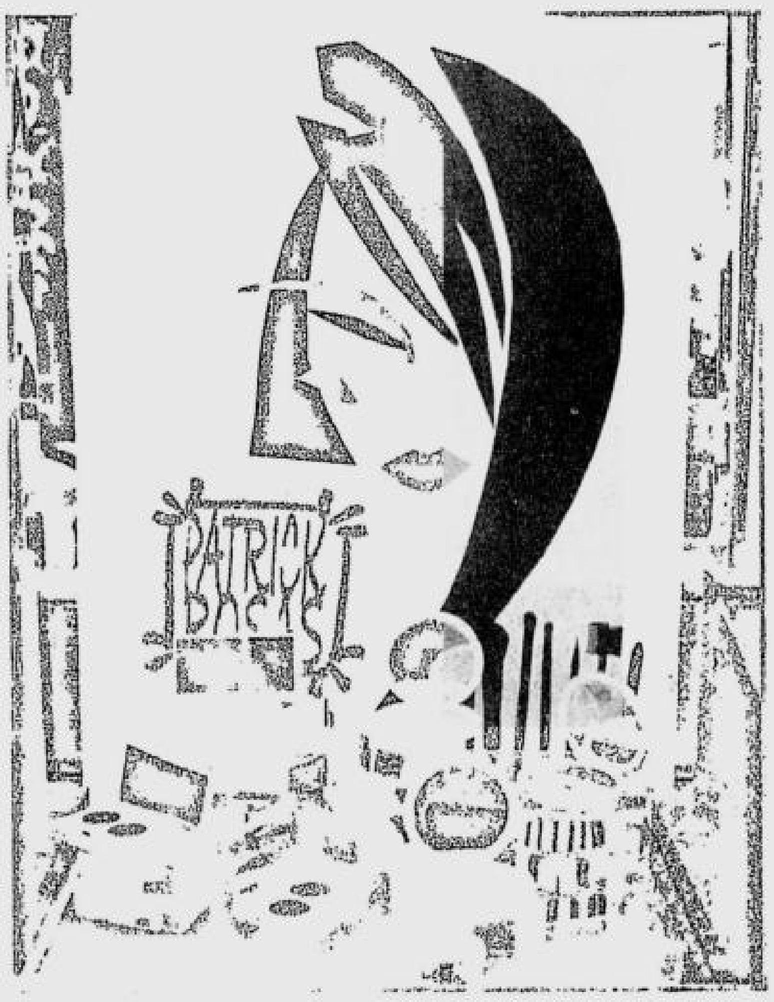
"When I was preparing for my first [coffee-table] book"—he has published two bestsellers called "Images" and "Muse"—"nobody wanted to model for me because they thought I w[illegible] just doing it on a whim. When the first was a success, everyone wanted to be part of the second book.

"Now, there are some who come up to me and say I should've gone to them for the makeup project!" he said, rolling his eyes skyward. "But I'm really happy that I've created many good relationships throughout the course of my career."

E-mail cmoral@inquirer.com.ph


THE MAKEUP logo, embossed on the palette, was created by clothing designer James Reyes.

AT THE LAUNCH. Rosas is flanked by (from left) business partners Vanessa Chungunco, Charlene Kang and Nikki Ng, and loyal client Gretchen Barretto.



PATRICK Rosas the makeup's promotional poster illustration was created by the makeup artist's friend, designer Inno Sotto.

Island Living

Everyday escape is now possible with scents of tropical paradise so close at hand

By Carla Sibal
Contributor

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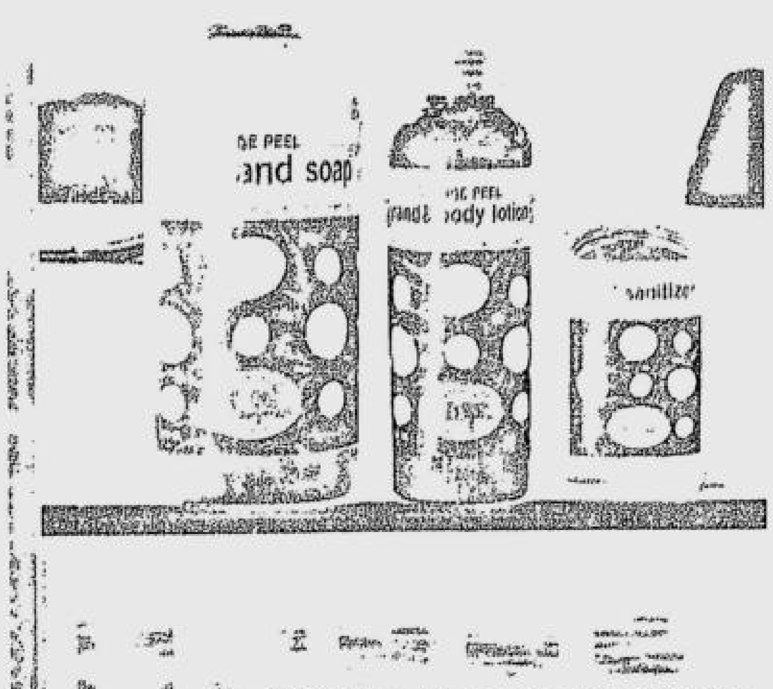
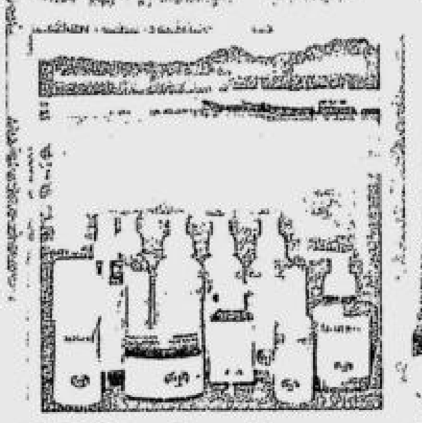


ORANGE scent for your hands' maintenance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RICE bran oil moisturizing facial wash

day cream
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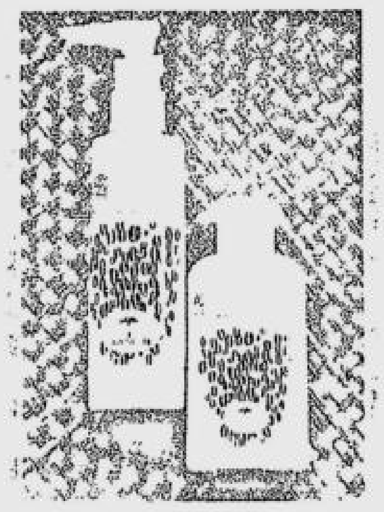
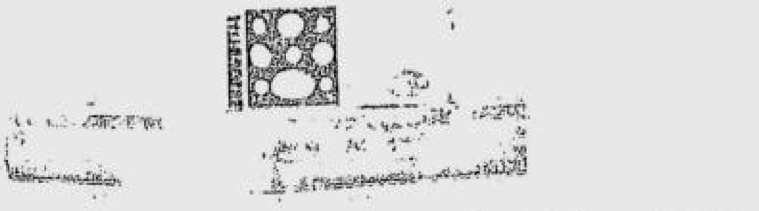

COFFEE for the skin

FRUITY regimen



HAND sanitizers in delicious scents

MASSAGE oils for well-being

SCENTS from the earth

RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Beauty shoutout!

I'm promoting the no-makeup look. Just put on good moisturizer and powder under your eyes, then cheek tint. Curl your lashes and put clear mascara, then sheer lip gloss. It's nice to see freckles and lines when you laugh. Cake foundation is out. Dewy is the new matte. And I'm a firm believer in bleaching eyebrows! Cream on cream is easier to use like Andrea from Beauty Bar instead of powder dissolved in cream. It's been my number one beauty trick since I was 15. Put less activator and more cream so you don't end up with blonde eyebrows. And don't forget to brush them upwards. —Bianca King (Actress/Model)

PARTY in Kitaro 寿司 style

Package for 10
P2000* only (P200/person)
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- 10 orders Rice Toppings (Choice of Sukiyakidon, Bibimba, Katsudon)
- 2 bottles Pepsi 1.5L
- 10 orders Fruit Jello

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P7485* only (P250/person)
- 1 order Shogun Special Big Party Tray
- 30 orders Rice Toppings (Choice of Oyakudon, Gyudon, Beef Yakinikudon, Tendon)
- 6 bottles Pepsi 1.5L
- 30 orders Fruit Jello

*Add 12% VAT

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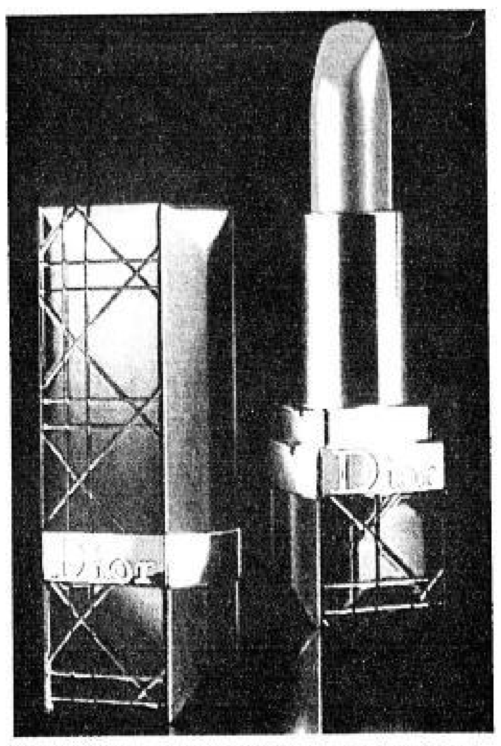
See posters for complete details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5083 Series of 2006

Makeup gift ideas for different personalities



ROUGE Dior Replenishing lip color, P1,200

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

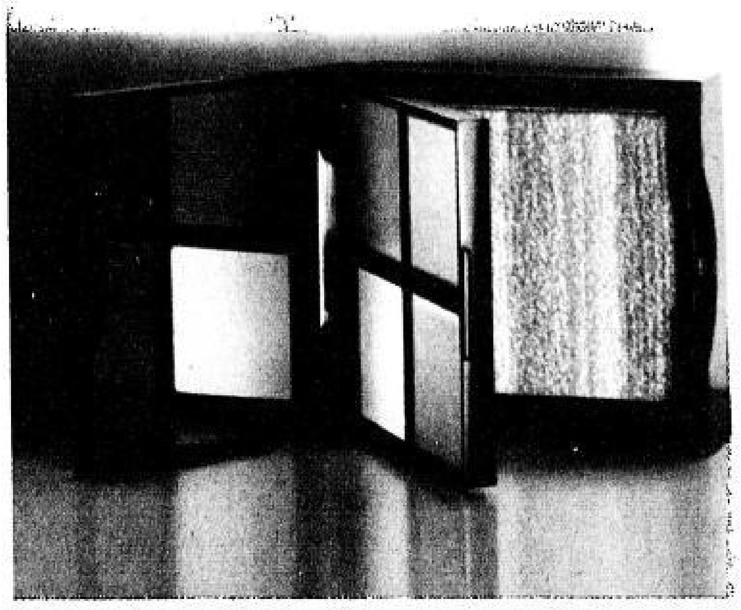
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CRICKET! She's my only sister and although we both love makeup, our styles could not be more different. She is no-frills Zen while I am all Louis XIV.

Readers may be someone like her who is very streamlined or they may be like me who is full of drama. For the two classes of readers, here are makeup products they may appreciate this Christmas.

For the streamlined woman, recommended is the Bobbi Brown Sparkle and Rubies Collection 2006. The streamlined woman appreciates versatility but does not like carrying too much stuff around. The perfect gift options for her in this collection are:

- **Shimmer Brick and Lip Kit** (P3,350)—it has four neutral/nude lip shades that suit every outfit or skin tone. The Shimmer brick with multiple shades of brown, pinks, and beige can be used on eyes as shadow and liner. It can also be used on the cheeks and all over face as a bronzer for an instant healthy glow. The streamlined woman will stick this neat package in her bag, and after adding mascara, she is all set.
- **Mini Brush set** (P2,600)—it is made of real hair and structured in such a way that application will be easy as pie. It comes in a neat black zipper case, good for traveling.

For foundation, the **Max Factor Flawless Perfection liquid** (P895) is advised.



BOBBI Brown Shimmer Brick and Lip Kit, P3,350

DIOR pretty charms in 002 Pink Enchantment, P2,900

One side is a primer with SPF 12 to blur minor flaws, protect skin, and make foundation stay flawless longer. Another side is the actual shade.

One great thing about this is that every shade blends into a wide range of skin color so not finding your actual shade is close to impossible. In fact I can wear both Creamy Ivory and Sand and it blends beautifully.

Flamboyant

For the flamboyant woman, Christian Dior's collection is suggested.

Every year Dior manages to incorporate trinkets with makeup. This year it is a heart-shaped silver padlock surrounded by Swarovski crystals, called **Dior Pretty Charm** (P2,900).

It opens to reveal a lip color and gloss on both halves of a broken heart. A tiny mirror where you can check your lips is on the lid.

You don't need to rummage in your bag for this as it is a bag charm so one always knows where it is.

The 001 Magical Seduction is fuschia with mauve gloss while the 002 Pink Enchantment is a duo of frosty pinks.

Rouge Dior lipstick has skincare properties that hydrates the driest lips, feels light and comfortable, and has strategic shimmer and rich color that makes lips look fuller without the cheap oily look.

The makeup is inspired by the lighting used in film sets and tries to come up with succulent lips for the user.

Check out the Christian Dior counters personally because although I loved the texture and finish, the two shades sent to me did not suit my skin tone so I cannot rave about any shade in particular.

Such a shame as the packaging was very elegant.

Flamboyant women have some unreasonable expectations when it comes to makeup.

I, for one, expect it to perform above and beyond the call of duty. I don't mind retouching my powder, lipstick and blush during an event, but I expect my eye makeup to stay put despite heavy sweating in this humid weather.

Make-up Forever has come out with a **pearly waterproof eye color** (P880) and **eyeliner pencil range** (P780). This is truly waterproof as it was designed for women who join water ballet competitions.

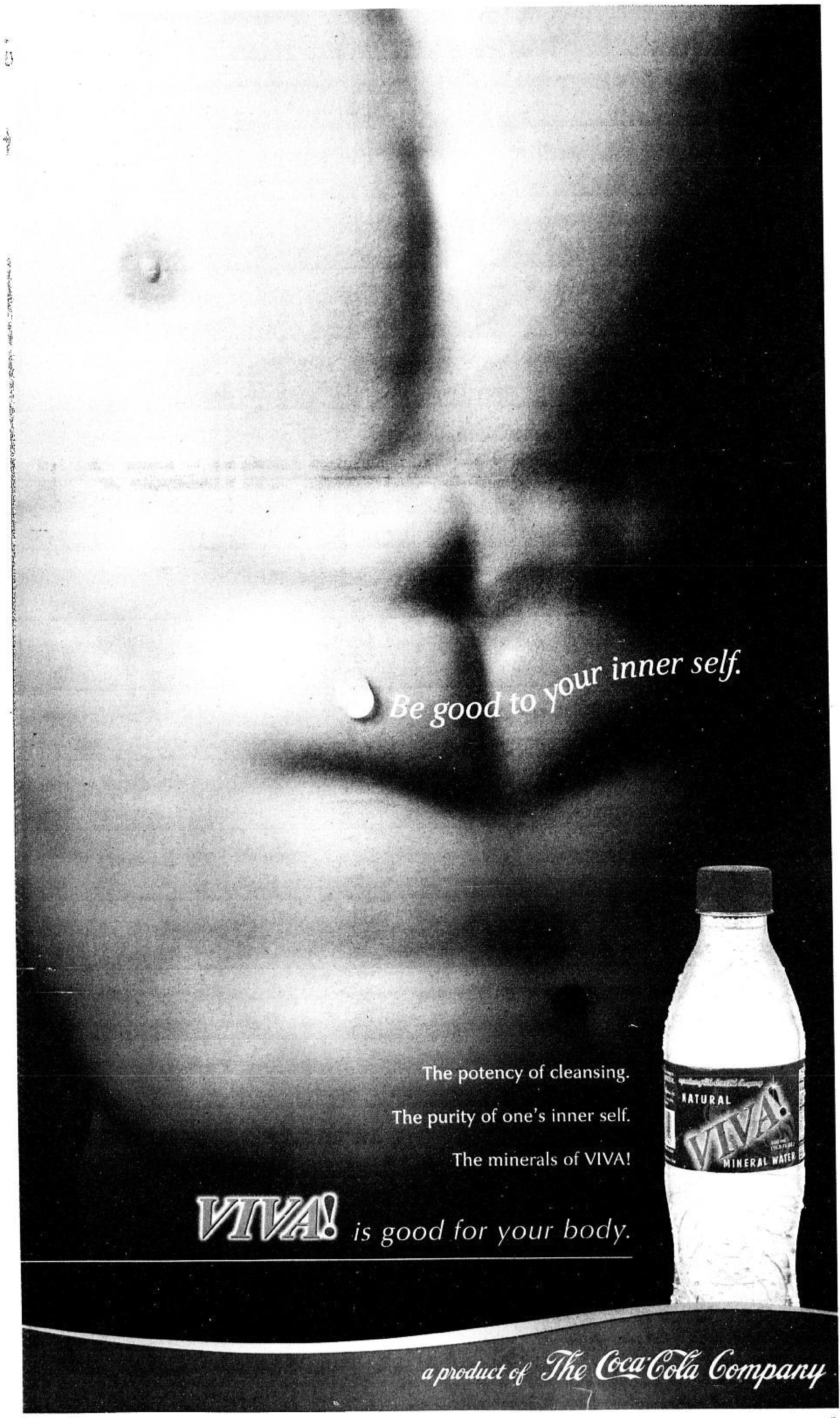
Of course, women who are conscious of their small Oriental eyes have even gone to the extent of using the black and brown variants of this in Boracay to make their eyes appear bigger and more deep-set.

It does, however, wash out with cleansing oil and eye makeup remover so there is no fear of stale makeup causing breakouts in the eye area.

I have the eyeliner in Navy which makes the whites of my eyes seem brighter and breaks the monotony of beige and brown eye shadows, instantly transforming my day eye makeup into something more interesting for the Holiday evening parties.

Make-up Forever is available at 3/F Shangri-La Mall and Marionnaud Mall Of Asia. Bobbi Brown and Christian Dior are exclusively available at Rustan's. Max factor can be found at leading department stores, Watson's and pcx.

You may e-mail the author at kinnysalas@yahoo.com



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and
Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

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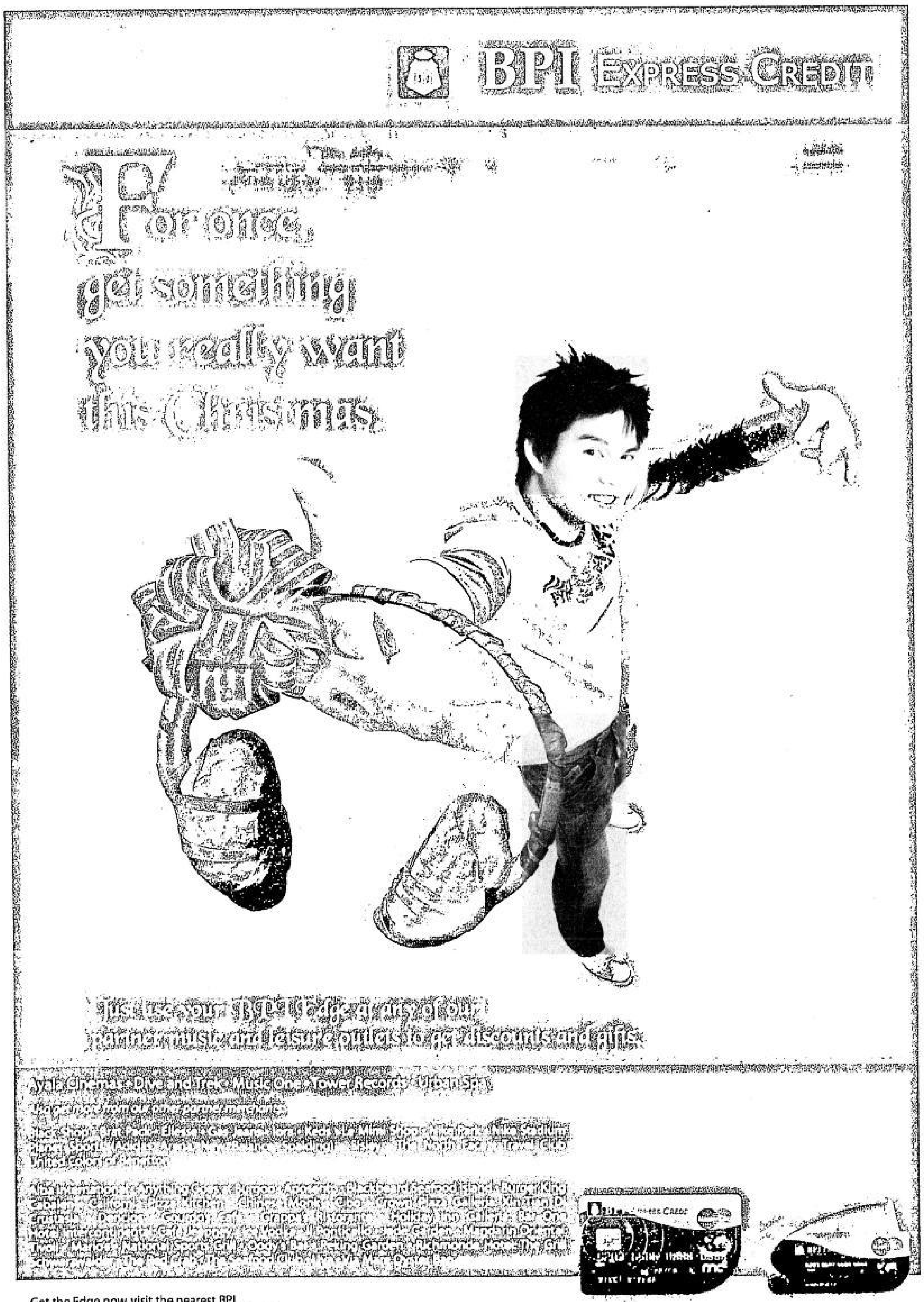
inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

FASHION

Holiday on spice!

Jewelstones

On Nadia: Lipstick emerald dress, P1,199.75; Beadworx black on silver chain necklace, P249.75; SM Accessories pearl necklace, P299.75.
On Monica: Redhead ruby dress, P499.75; Oro opaque stockings, P149.75



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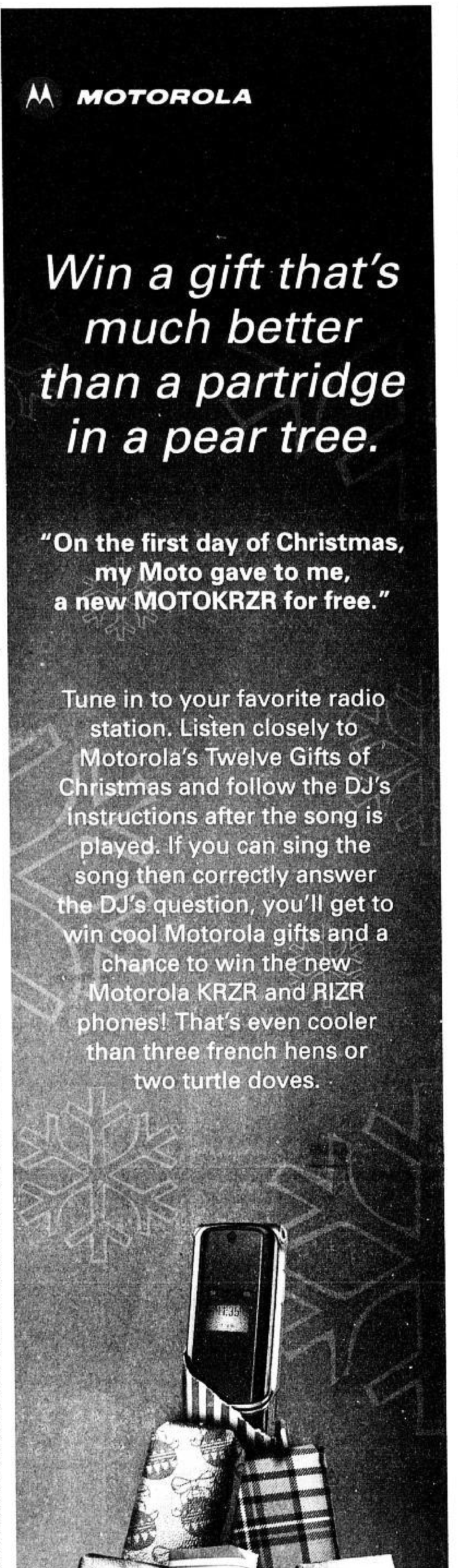

MOTOROLA

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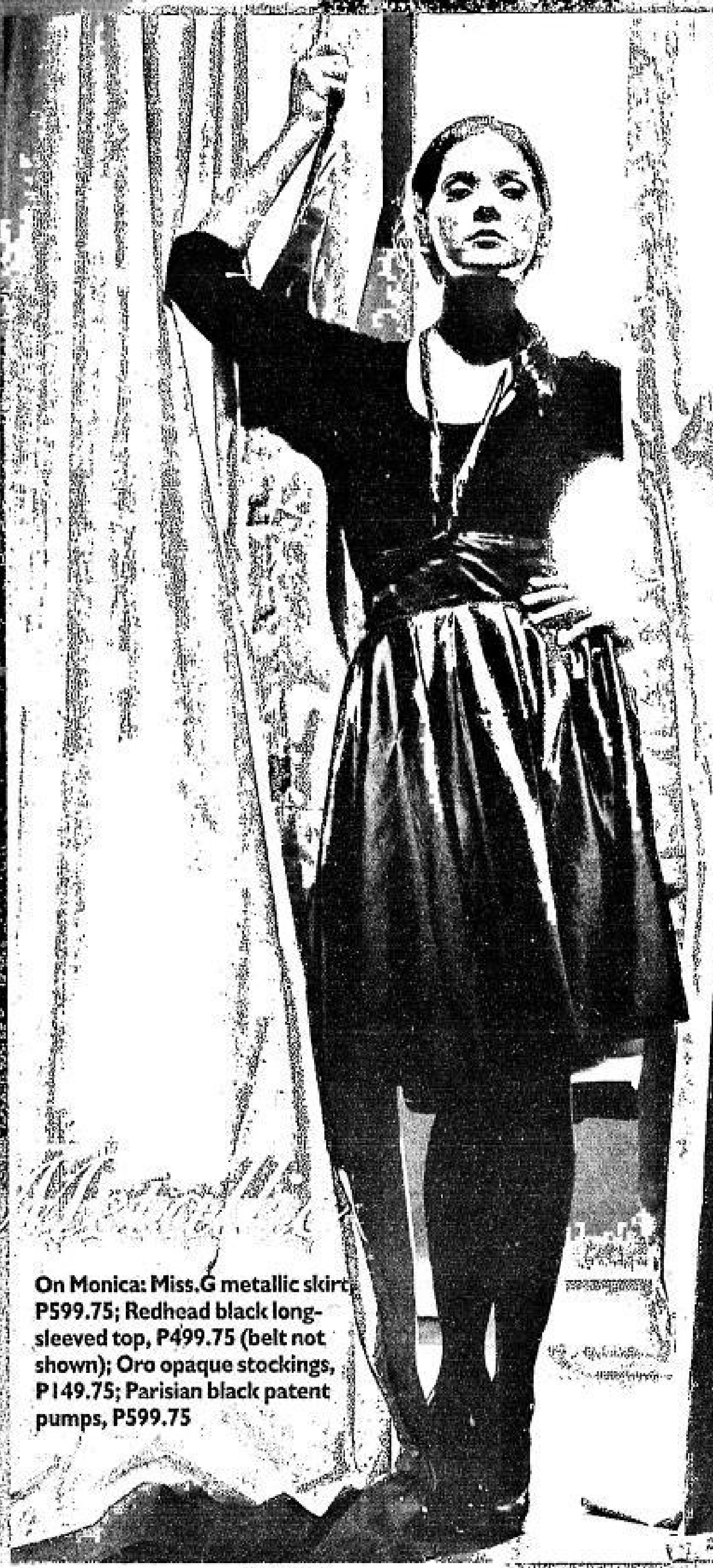
"On the first day of Christmas, my Moto gave to me, a new MOTOKRZR for free."

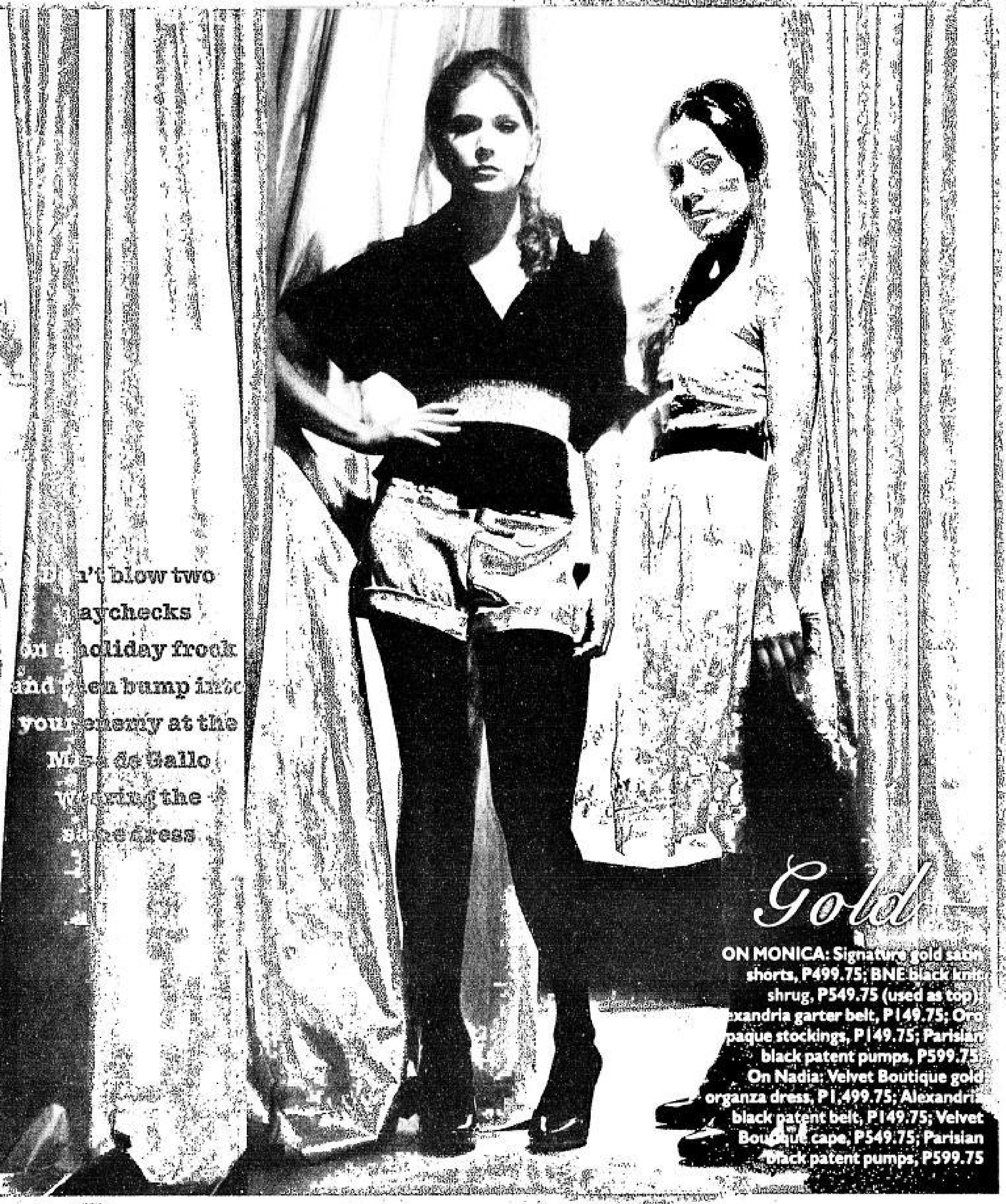
Tune in to your favorite radio station. Listen closely to Motorola's Twelve Gifts of Christmas and follow the DJ's instructions after the song is played. If you can sing the song then correctly answer the DJ's question, you'll get to win cool Motorola gifts and a chance to win the new Motorola KRZR and RIZR phones! That's even cooler than three french hens or two turtle doves.

MOTOROLA 12 GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS



On Monica: Miss.G metallic skirt, P599.75; Redhead black long-sleeved top, P499.75 (belt not shown); Oro opaque stockings, P149.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P599.75

Don't blow two paychecks on a holiday frock and then bump into your enemy at the Misa de Gallo wearing the same dress



ON MONICA: Signature gold satin shorts, P499.75; BNE black knit shrug, P549.75 (used as top); Alexandria garter belt, P149.75; Oro opaque stockings, P149.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P599.75
On Nadia: Velvet Boutique gold organza dress, P1,499.75; Alexandria black patent belt, P149.75; Velvet Boutique cape, P549.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P599.75

Mabuhay!

Jenni Epperson

Tease the season!

THERE ARE ALL SORTS OF party dresses. The simple and chic, the ornate and over-styled, the expensive cocktail dress.

But the most important one [illegible] had the old thing for ages and it looks effortlessly chic frock.

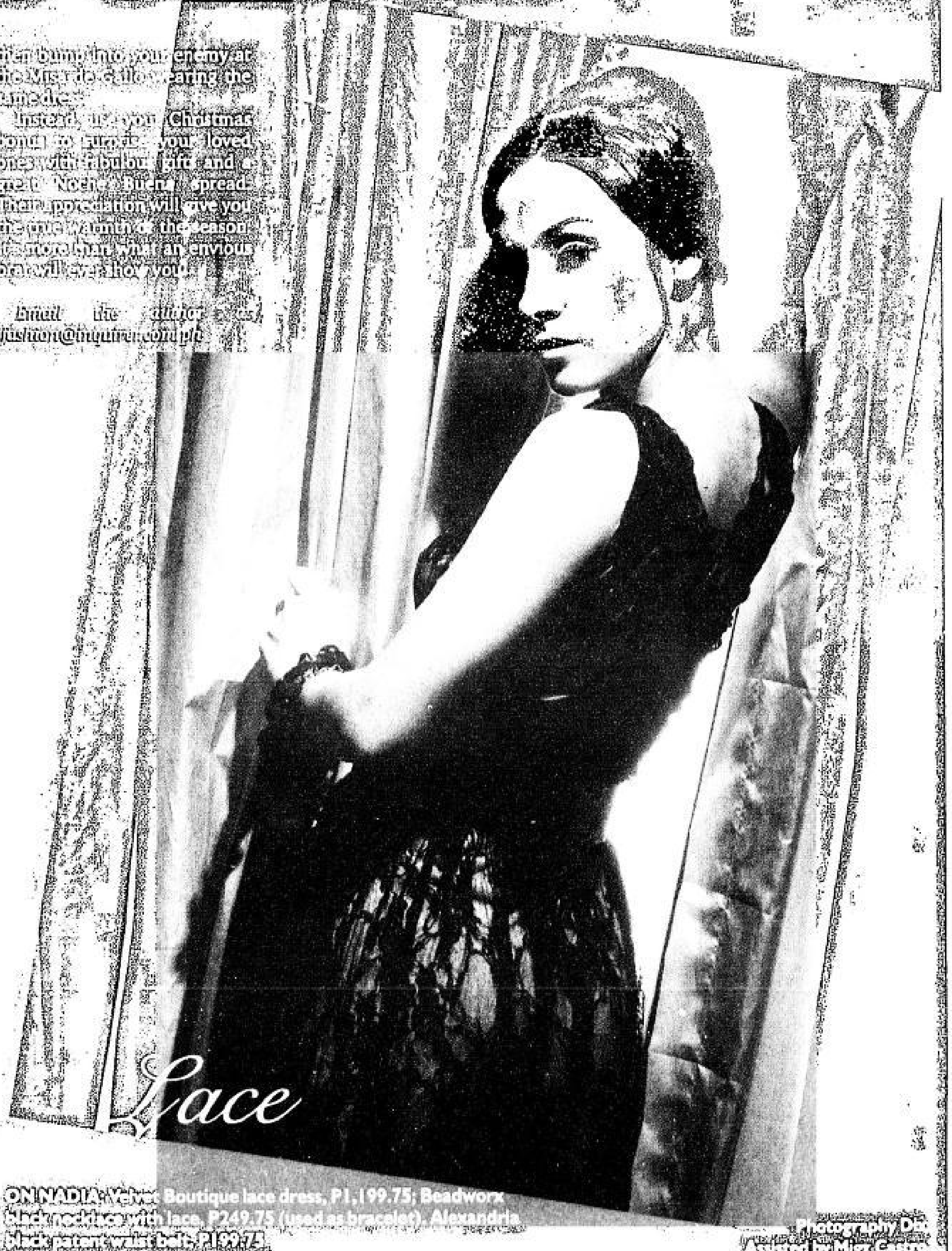
Sadly, it's the hardest to find. But if you move over to SM department stores, you'll find out how they've got it all for you: jewel-colored dresses, satin separates, sparkly dresses and little black numbers that will bring sexy back this Christmas.

With bills piling up and an unfinished Christmas list, the kind of dress you'll need is one that's as intoxicating (Why do you think it's called a cocktail dress?) as a 1792 Ridgemont Reserve bourbon, yet costs less than a shot of Tanduay.

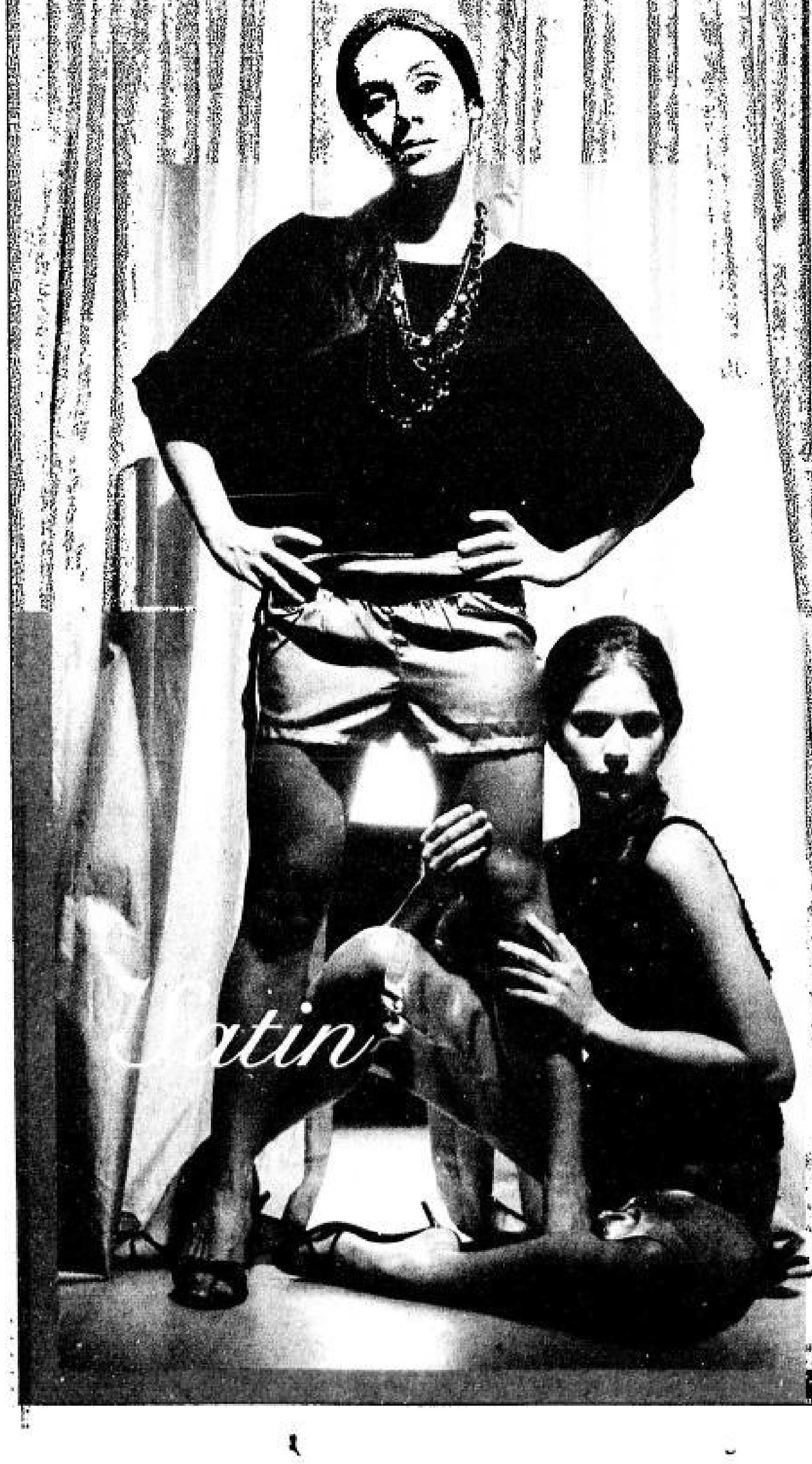
'Tis the season to be sexy and wise: don't blow two paychecks on a holiday frock and then bump into your enemy at the Misa de Gallo wearing the same dress.

Instead, use your Christmas bonus to surprise your loved ones with fabulous gifts and a great Noche Buena spread. Their appreciation will give you the true warmth of the season. It's more than what an envious brat will ever show you.

Email the author at jjfashion@inquirer.com.ph



ON NADIA: Velvet Boutique lace dress, P1,199.75; Beadworx black necklace with lace, P249.75 (used as bracelet); Alexandria black patent waist belt, P199.75



ON NADIA: V&M bronze satin shorts, P399.75; Flirt black dolman-sleeved top, P699.75; SM Accessories necklaces, P249.75 and 299.75; Parisian black stilettos, P499.75.
On Monica: Signature gold satin capris, P549.75; Millie sequined top, P799.75; Parisian black stilettos, P499.75

Photography Do
Assisted by Migz Castro
Styling Kat Cruz
Makeup Mikee Raymundo
for MAC Cosmetics using
the Jewelescent Collection
Hair Vianney Guese
for L'Oreal Paris Studio Line
Models Monica Cotton
of Ideal People Model Management
and Nadia Cross of Society Models
Clothes available
at SM Department Store

On Monica: Miss.G metallic skirt, P599.75; Redhead black long-sleeved top, P499.75 (belt not shown); Oro opaque stockings, P149.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P599.75

> Don't blow two paychecks on a holiday frock and then bump into your enemy at the Misa de Gallo wearing the same dress

Gold

ON MONICA: Signature gold [illegible] shorts, P499.75; BNE black [illegible] shrug, P549.75 (used as top); [illegible]xandria garter belt, P149.75; Oro [illegible]paque stockings, P149.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P599.75

On Nadia: Velvet Boutique gold organza dress, P1,499.75; Alexandria black patent belt, P149.75; Velvet Bou[illegible] cape, P549.75; Parisian black patent pumps, P599.75

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[illegible] the season to be sexy and [illegible] and then bump into your enemy at the Misa de Gallo wearing the same dress.

Instead, [illegible] Christmas [illegible] you loved [illegible] will [illegible] you [illegible] the season [illegible] envious [illegible] will [illegible] you.

Email the author: jjfashion@inquirer.com.ph

Satin

Lace

ON NADIA: Velvet Boutique lace dress, P1,199.75; Beadworx black necklace with lace, P249.75 (used as bracelet); Alexandria black patent waist belt, P199.75

ON NADIA: V&H bronze satin shorts, P399.75; [illegible] top, P499.75; SM Accessories necklaces, P249.75 and 299.75; Parisian black stilettos, P499.75

On Monica: Signature gold satin capris, P549.75; [illegible] top, P499.75; Parisian black stilettos, P499.75

Photography by [illegible] MAC Cosmetics [illegible] SM Department Store

fashion shout

Bazaar festival

WORLDBEX SERVICES INTERNATIONAL IS holding the "6th World Bazaar Festival" until Dec. 17 at the World Trade Center.

The annual bazaar is co-presented by ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation. Proceeds will go to ABS-CBN Foundation's Bantay Kalikasan, an organization that promotes awareness in nature and advocates the preservation of the environment. Call Joseph Ramos at 6371116 or 6371118. E-mail full_circlecommunications@yahoo.com.

Para sa inaway ng syota.

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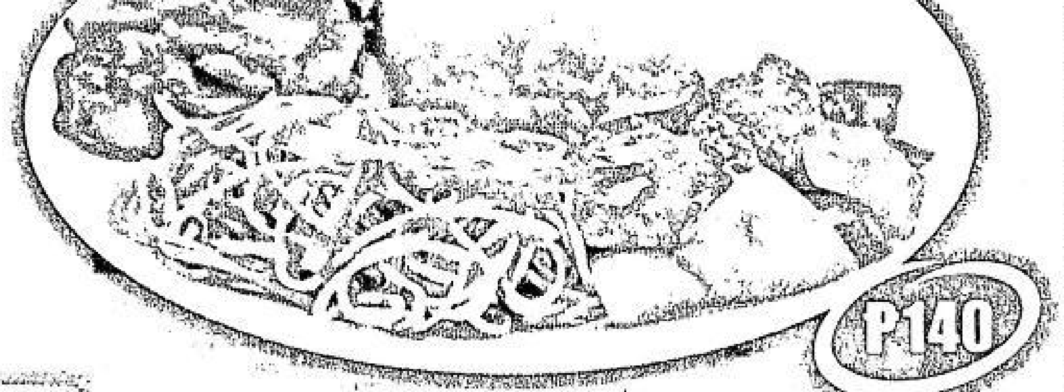

P140

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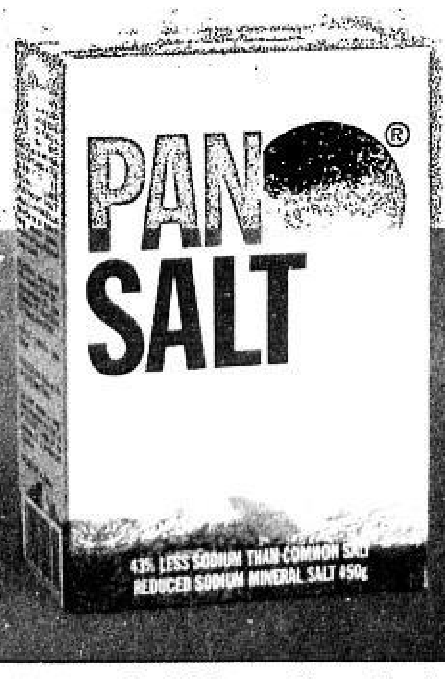

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MOTOROLA

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"On the second day of Christmas, my Moto gave to me, 2 ROKR E2s and a new MOTOKRZR for free."

Tune in to your favorite radio station. Listen closely to Motorola's Twelve Gifts of Christmas and follow the DJ's instructions after the song is played. If you can sing the song then correctly answer the DJ's question, you'll get to win cool Motorola gifts and a chance to win the new Motorola KRZR and RIZR phones! That's even cooler than three french hens or two turtle doves.

MOTOROLA 12 GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS

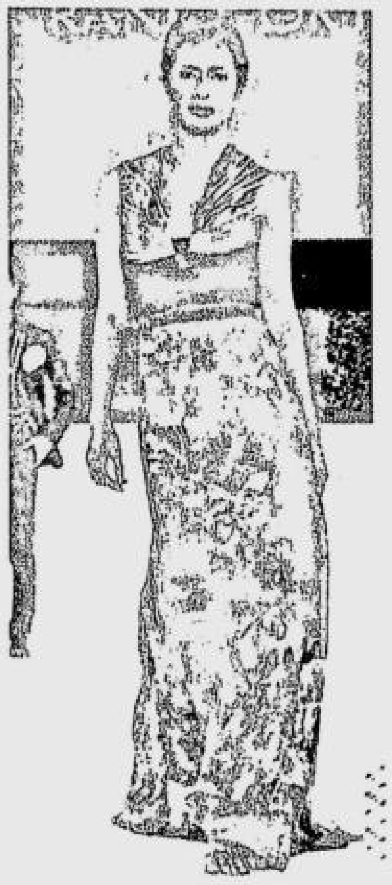
JC Buendia

ARCY Gayatin

TIPPI Ocampo

JUN Escario

FREDERICK Peralta

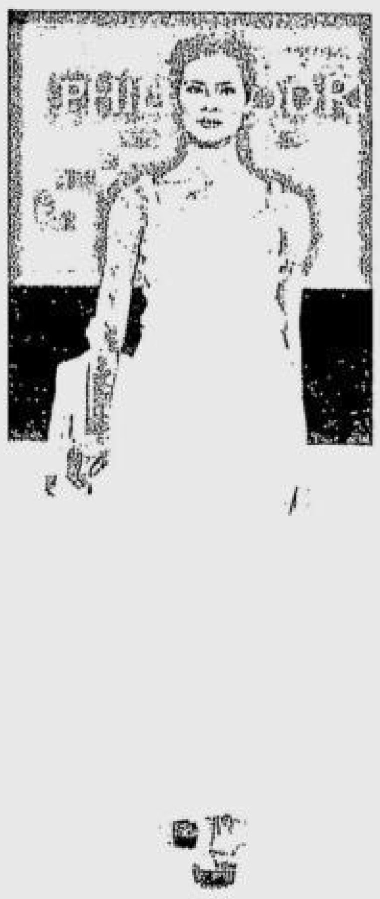

RANDY Ortiz

MIKE dela Rosa

JOJI Lloren

RENEE Salud

LULU Tan Gan


PHILIP Rodriguez

ITO Curata

Some wearables, some forgettables

From page G6

next year, there was little if any we saw in the veteran Ocampo's collection composed of soft, strapless dresses made of chiffon and inspired by the colors of the hibiscus.

Not that the pieces were bad. In fact, they were very wearable (in keeping, perhaps, with Ocampo's sensibility as an RTW designer). But the collection was neither new nor "trendy" to elicit even a twinge of excitement in our weary muscles.

Salud's reruns

Similar parameters hobbled Salud's lace and chiffon numbers that looked like mixed-up and toned-down reruns of stuff he used to produce for beauty queens of yesteryears.

In contrast, Mike de la Rosa was able to produce smart, albeit simple and abbreviated, black dresses, gowns and pantsuits that skimmed and flattered their wearer's bodies. Despite having channeled looks from the 1940s and 1980s, the designer was able to come up with current and versatile pieces that played on structure, silhouette and proportion.

Speaking of proportion, this quality seemed to have eluded a number of JC Buendia's pink and white pieces, particularly an off-shoulder top that was noteworthy for its tight and awkward fit. He fared a bit better with his empire dresses, but the designer was obviously most comfortable doing what he does best: tailored separates for him and her.

Ito Curata, who made his "Metrowear" debut, stuck to the tried-and-tested by doing several permutations of the red-carpet look in "summer-weight" fabrics such as lace, silk, organza and taffeta.

By virtue of his experience and reputation as one of Sharon Stone's former designers, Curata could fashion such crowd-pleasing numbers with his eyes closed. As such, expectations were high for him to produce something totally new. Well, perhaps next time.

Ample time needed

Now that organizers plan to stage "Metrowear" as a year-round affair in 2007, the recently concluded series should give them some reason for pause.

Despite its noble intentions to showcase the best of Philippine fashion, the series was a cautionary tale on the clear and present dangers posed by overexposure. It only goes to show that as artists, designers need ample time and inspiration to produce their best works.

Case in point: After his strong showing two months ago with chic, nearly all-black numbers, Randy Ortiz seemed to have faltered this time with a less cohesive collection akin to a remixed and digitized greatest hits CD gone awry.

Although the designer's wearable pieces, which made use of a cacophony of textures, materials, silhouettes and colors, were able to stand on their own, they appeared disparate when taken collectively.

Rhett Eala stumbled in a different way. In his desire, perhaps, to explore new territory, the usually competent designer abandoned his trademark soft, layered chiffon dresses in favor of stiff and embellished shifts made of raw silk, linen and brocade with mixed results.

Eala, who adorned his RTW dresses with stones, soft paillettes and tiered sleeves, should also think twice before venturing into men's wear. The designer's sleeveless shirts made of lace and various other fabrics proved low points in his collection.

Still, there were those who appeared impervious to overexposure.

Aseron, who shared the stage with Vittorio, Joey Samson and Cary Santiago as the evening's most applauded, was one of them. He showed another ace up his sleeve via black-and-white printed cotton ensembles with an overlay of *jusi*.

In keeping with the sultry season, Aseron added bits and pieces of color to his collection, which he confined to belt loops, cutouts and jutting-out details reminiscent of pieces from a jigsaw puzzle. In lieu of deconstruction and his trademark pleats, he opted for the clean, tailored look.

Vittorio and Santiago

Like Aseron, Vittorio, who produced some some of his best pieces in seasons, proved that tailored pieces need not be stiff and boring. With plenty of imagination, structured cotton separates can look feminine but sharp, wearable but exceptional.

Among Vittorio's (who seemed to have channeled a bit of Marc Jacobs, down to the Mickey Mouse shirt) superb touches included dresses inspired by the tuxedo and men's checkered shirts that not a few women in the room coveted. He also fashioned gingham wraparounds and pin-stripped suspenders in the shape of a lapel.

If Aseron described his work as a "happy" collection, then Vittorio's was a snappy one that popped and crackled with every passing piece.

Meanwhile, Samson drew inspiration from his school-boy days to fashion reworked pieces that capitalized on his strengths as a master tailor and "manipulator" of fabrics. He also resorted to layering and ad-hoc smocking in new and unconventional ways.

If majority of the collections is anything to go by, tailored pieces sans lining and bulky shoulder pads will be big this summer. So will empire and shapeless dresses in black and gold as seen in the works of Lulu Tan Gan and OJ Hofer. Champagne shades—from blush to lilac—are also bound to be big as per Rajo Laurel's forecast.

It doesn't mean, however, that soft, ladylike gowns have gone the way of the peasant skirt. Jun Escario, for one, opted to do long, flowing chiffon dresses in aqua and gunmetal gray, which we found a bit tired and frilly.

But if soft gowns and dresses were to dominate next year's fashion scene, then Santiago couldn't have done a better job of advancing the look.

The Cebuano designer, who used to work in the Middle East, put his training abroad to good use by coming up with intricately detailed and corseted crepe de chine numbers that made use of appliqués and strips of fabrics executed in such a way as to mimic a dragon's scales.

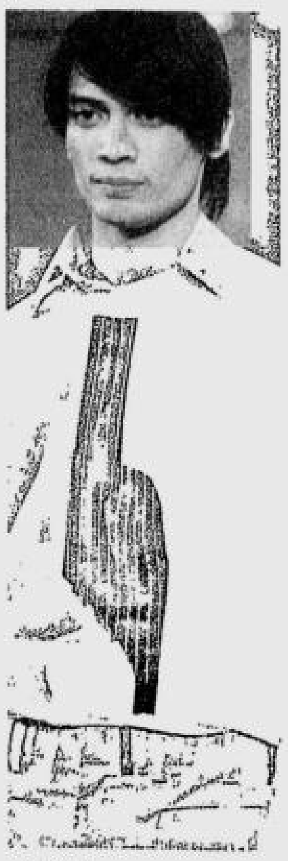
Santiago's choice of nude, instead of, say, shocking red, was an inspired move, as it tempered an otherwise elaborate collection from going overboard. Perhaps, only when a designer plumbs through his past as well as looks ahead into the future can he produce his most inspired pieces.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

EFREN Ocampo

JOEY Samson

ANTHONY Nocom


IVAR Aseron

OJ Hofer

RHETT Eala

RAJO Laurel

PATRICE Ramos-Diaz

PHOEBE Philo

FASHION BUZZ

Hot, haute, hot news!

PHOEBE PHILO LEFT HER post as creative director of Chloe last January to spend more time with her family. Barely a year after, she's back in the fashion scene... quietly and unofficially, it seems.

The designer, who was responsible for putting Chloe back on the fashion map with her feminine little dresses and iconic handbags, is reportedly consulting with Gap. Since the clothing company moved its design office in London, it's been working with design consultants like Philo.

The clothing company also launched Roland Mouret's capsule collection of dresses early this month, but there's no news if any of Philo's designs has or ever will reach the stores.

Gap can certainly benefit from Philo's design expertise, and fashion fans will surely be thrilled to get their hands on Philo pieces with Gap prices!

Bazaar of vintage finds

THE PEACE JOE Christmas Bazaar will be held on Dec. 16-17, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., at 113 B. Gonzales St., Loyola Heights, QC.

The bazaar features one-of-a-kind vintage finds, reworked jackets, tops, hoodies, belts, bags and other items.

The bazaar will also see the launching the first batch of Peace Joe graphic tees. Limited stocks only.

There will be free snacks all day for shoppers; also an open bar from 4 p.m. onward.

- E-mail joegirls@gmail.com or text 0927-8142678 or 0917-8878749.

LOVE, PEACE &
ROCK N' ROLL JOE!

CONVERSE Brand of the year

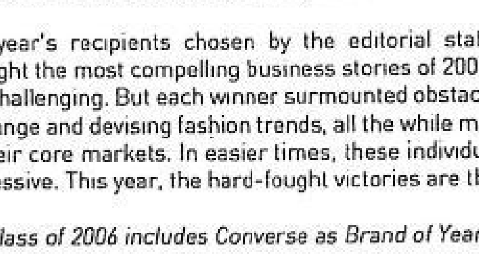
For two decades now, the annual FN Achievement Awards have been widely acknowledged as the industry's highest honor.

The distinguished list of 2006 honorees includes 13 of the industry's top achievers. Its heady mix of fashion ad athletic players, big and small retailers, prolific designers, and the most promising up-and-comers.

The four Hall of Famers, all industry veterans, prove that hard work, perseverance and smarts pay off big time.

This year's recipients chosen by the editorial staff of *Footwear News* spotlight the most compelling business stories of 2006. For many, business was challenging. But each winner surmounted obstacles by swiftly adapting to change and devising fashion trends, all the while maintaining an iron grip on their core markets. In easier times, these individual triumphs would be impressive. This year, the hard-fought victories are the stuff of legends.

The class of 2006 includes Converse as Brand of Year among other FN Achievement Awardees.



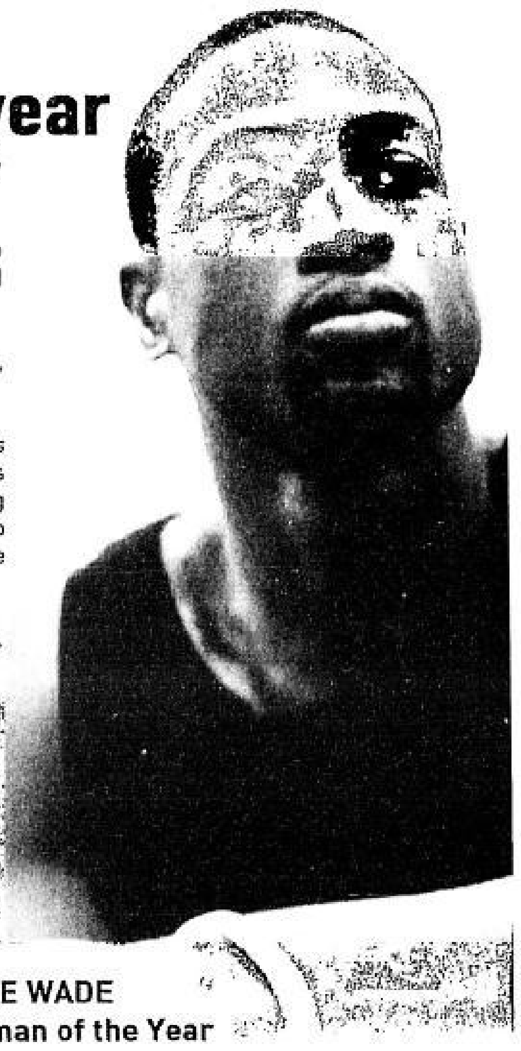
THE CONVERSE STORY

The history of Converse tells the story why it is FNAA's 2006 Brand of the year.

More than just footwear, apparel and accessories, Converse is a story of legends, heroes, and innovators tied together by love of sport. It is a script that spans nearly a hundred years; the ultimate highlight reel. It is a catalogue of great moments starting from the playing fields and hard courts spilling into everyday lives. Converse is an American original. Converse is for those who choose their own paths.

Years have passed and things are not the same. Today, Converse is not just canvas and a rubber. Converse has grown in epic proportion. Today, Converse comes in great collections of global high-technology performance footwear from the most sought-after basketball meticulously constructed to withstand the rigors and demands of today's heart-pounding games on the hard court to other sports categories like Sports heritage as well as lifestyle Sports Classics, the same all-time favorite--the All-American, All-Authentic, All-Original, All-Star Converse Chuck Taylor.

In recent years, Converse took the path of freshening its classic shoes with new designer touches and fashion-forward styling driving its lifestyle category straight to the top of the sales chart.



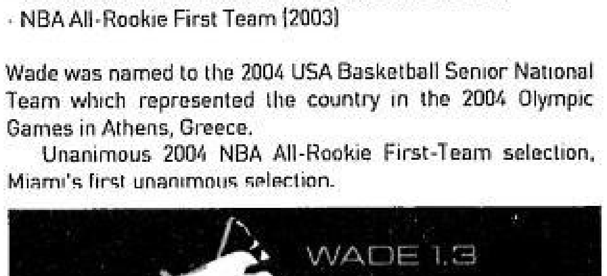
DWYANE WADE
Sportsman of the Year

Just like Converse, the brief history of Dwyane Wade on the hard court as well as the sports and fashion limelight tells the story why he is Sports Illustrated 2006 Sportsman of the Year.This a new addition to Dwyane Wade's long list of achievements

- The Finals MVP (2006)
- Two-Time NBA All-Star (2005, 2006)
- NBA All-Star Skills Challenge Champion (2006)
- Two-Time All-NBA Selection (2005, 2006)
- Two-Time All-NBA Defensive Selection (2005, 2006)
- NBA All-Rookie First Team (2003)

Wade was named to the 2004 USA Basketball Senior National Team which represented the country in the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece.

Unanimous 2004 NBA All-Rookie First-Team selection, Miami's first unanimous selection.



Now available at your favorite stores nationwide!

MOTOROLA

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MOTOROLA 12 GIFTS OF CHRISTMAS

Some wearables, some forgettables

Ivar Aseron, Vittorio Barba, Cary Santiago get their styles right for spring-summer next season. Other designers are simply off-season

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

A FRIEND ONCE SAID THAT FASHION designers, whether wittingly or not, generally fall under two groups: those who constantly look back to the past and those who gaze unflinchingly to the future.

We were reminded of that when we recently went through a gamut of clothes from the spring-summer collections of 23 of the country's top designers at the Rockwell Tent.

Billed as "Metrowear '07," the event was the culmination of a series of smaller fashion shows sponsored by Samsung and organized by Metro magazine since October.

While those who stubbornly cling to the past tend to repeat themselves (or worse, do a haphazard version of someone else's work and claim it as their own), those who blindly venture into the future face the risk of falling flat on their faces.

Although my friend was clearly in favor of the futurists, one group, he said, isn't always necessarily better than the other. Through the years, fashion gems as well as duds have been known to come out with regularity from both camps.

But no matter which direction they took that night, the featured "Metrowear" designers either soared to new heights like Ivar Aseron and Vittorio Barba or crashed like Tippi Ocampo and Arcy Gayatin.

For a collection made of iridescent fabrics and inspired by shiny insects, Ocampo's clothes appeared strangely lackluster from afar. Up close, a number of tops and buttons were ill-fitting and betrayed unmistakable puckering.

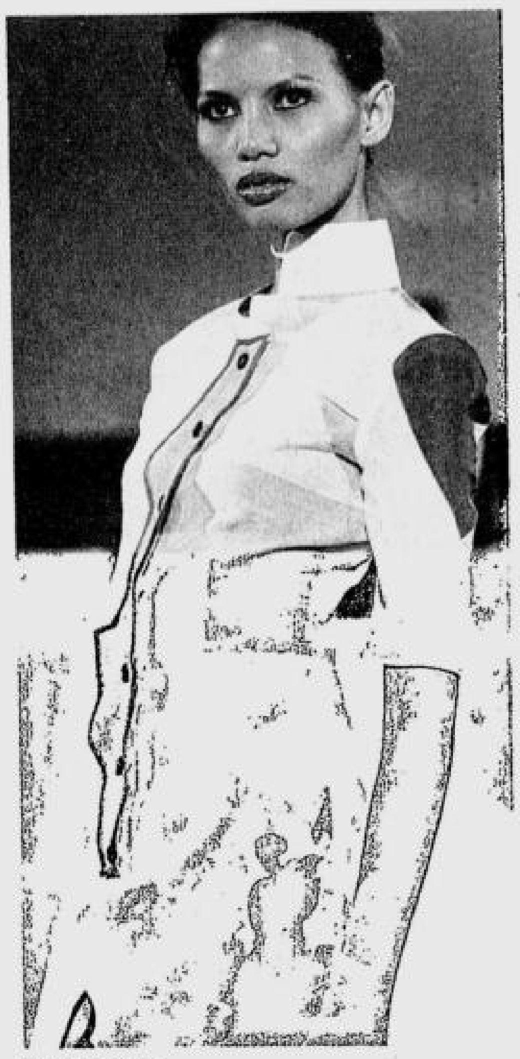
The usually reliable Gayatin seemed to have run out of creative steam this time around. Her second-rate shift dresses made of brocade, taffeta and jersey were no better than the ones produced by booted-out contestants of "Project Runway."

While some got stuck in the tried and tested (and utterly predictable) like Efren Ocampo and Renee Salud, others, like Frederick Peralta, deliberately went for the "shock and awe" approach via huge, zebra-printed cotton dresses.

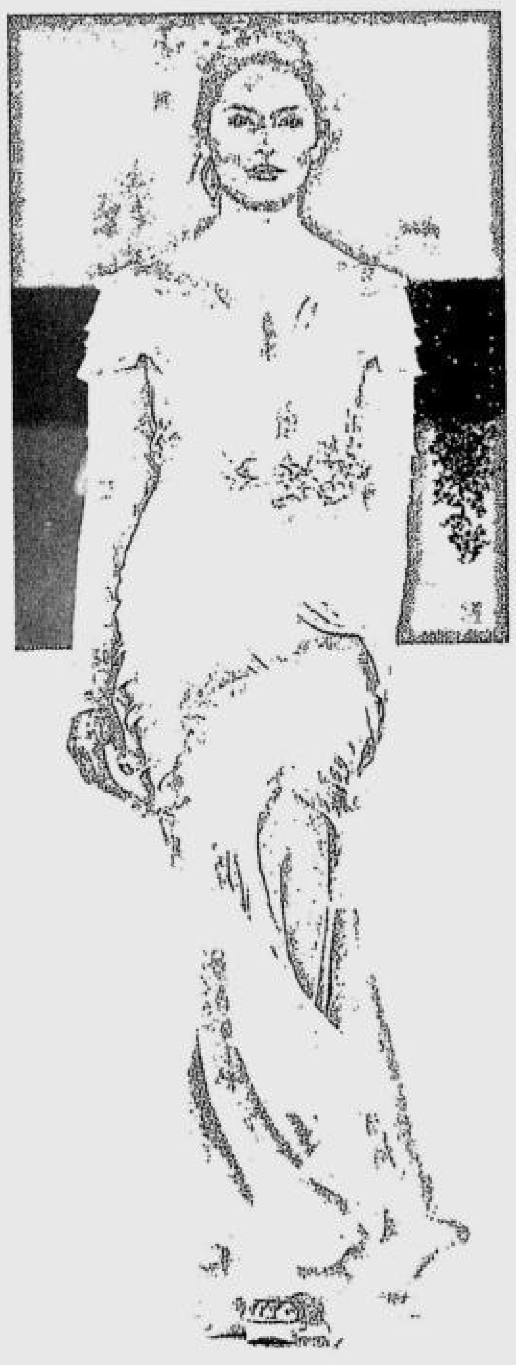
Due perhaps to his characteristic wit, Peralta came out of the "bulagaan" virtually unscathed. In fact, a number of matrons found his clothes "interesting." Now, if only he had produced a "light" version similar to the one worn by Assunta de Rossi to appeal to a younger clientele.

If the show were about trends for

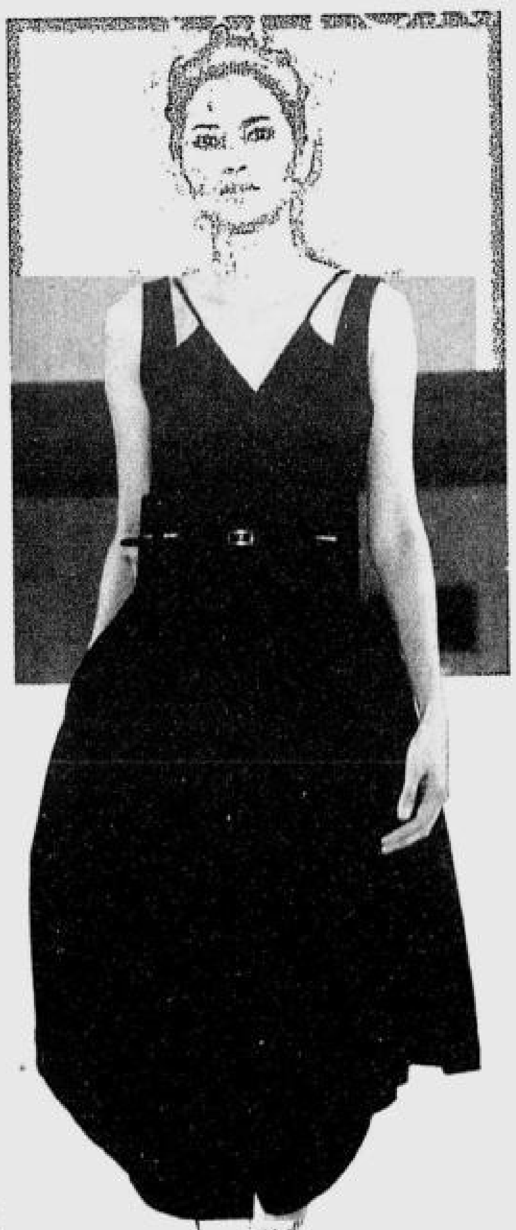
SOME/ G4



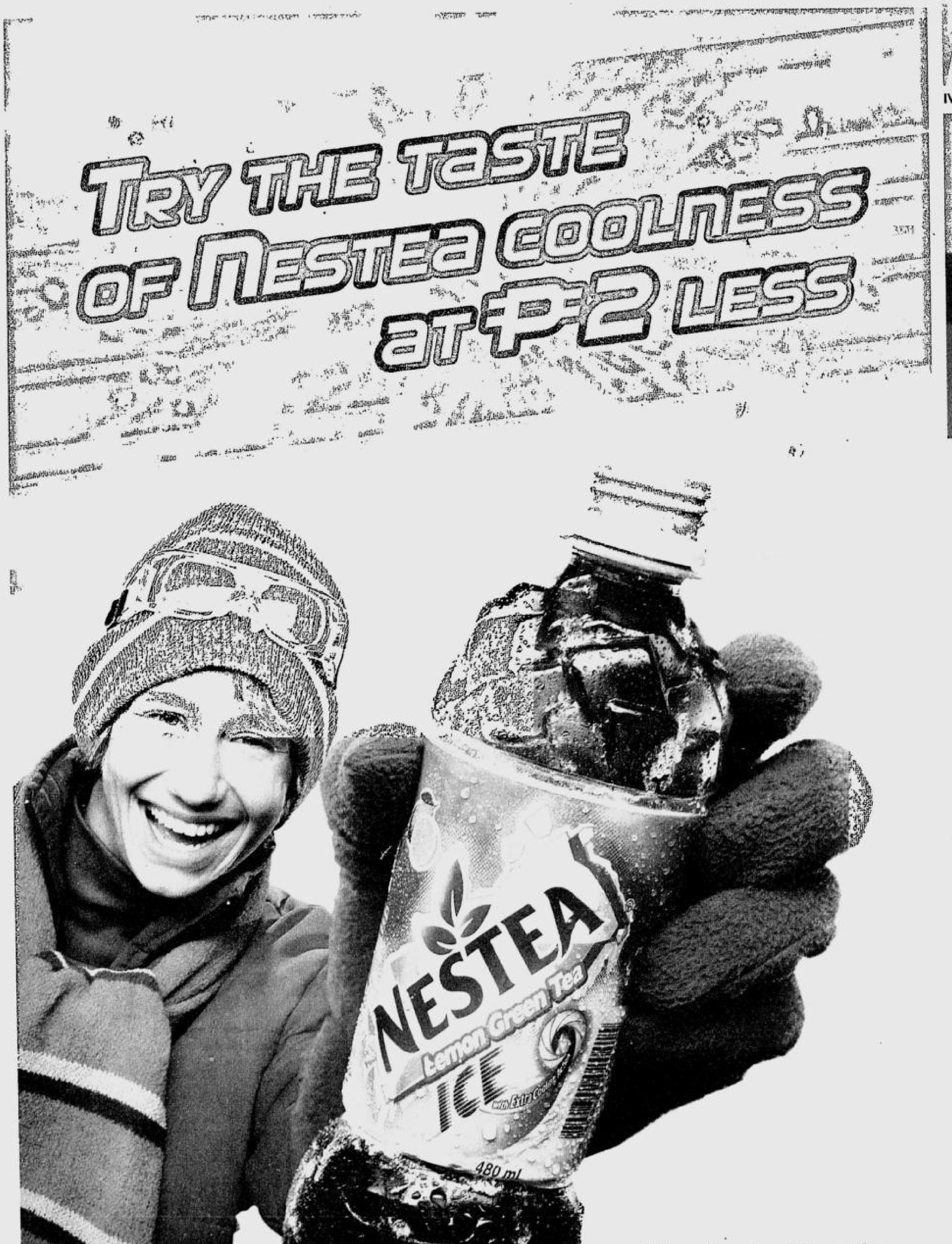
IVAR Aseron



CARY Santiago



VITTORIO



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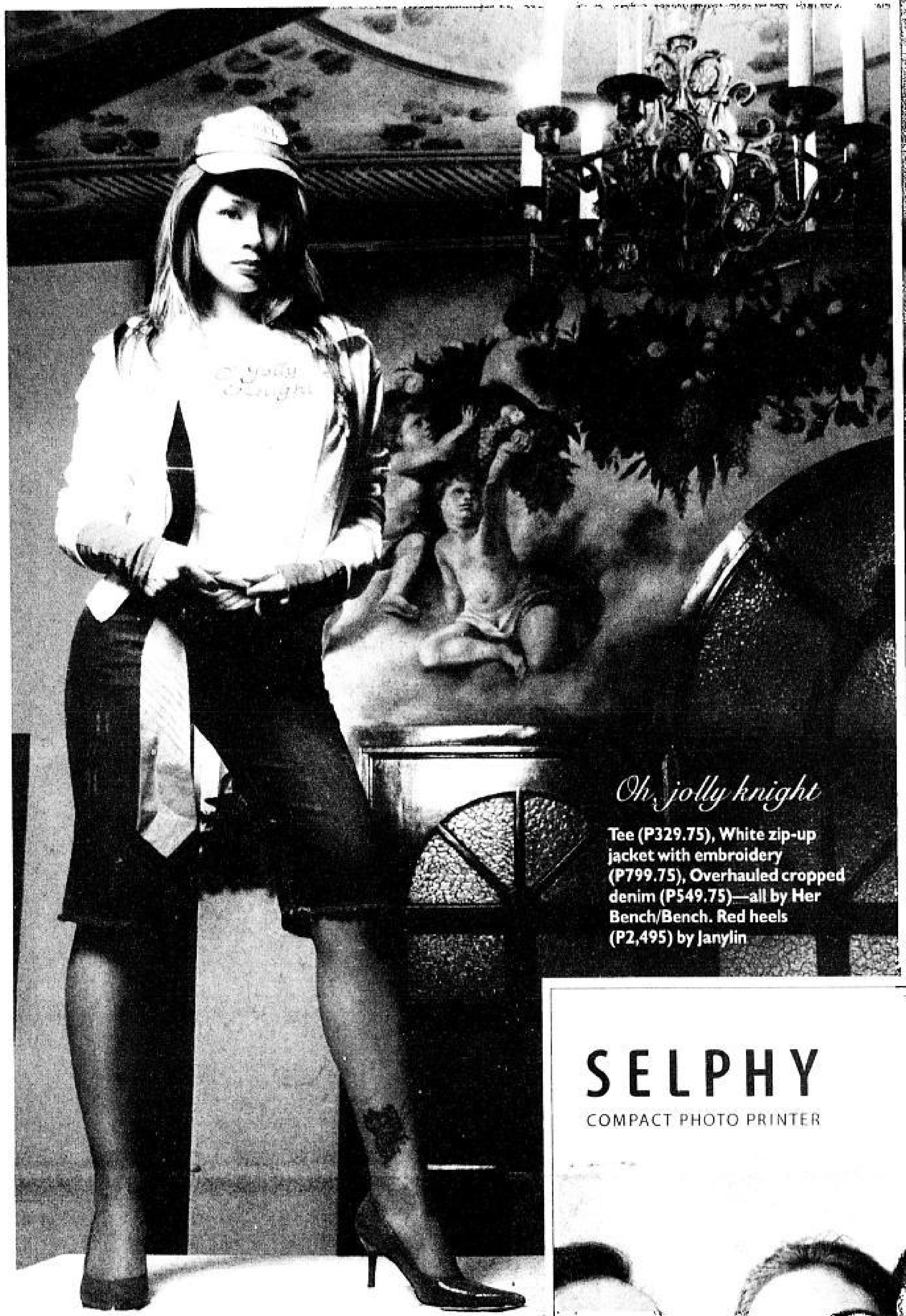
LIFESTYLE



Oh jolly knight

Tee (P329.75), White zip-up jacket with embroidery (P799.75), Overhauled cropped denim (P549.75)—all by Her Bench/Bench. Red heels (P2,495) by Janylin

Holiday layers

Layering is a great way to dress creatively and show off your personality, while staying warm and toasty

By Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

YOU KNOW THAT CHRISTMAS is just around the corner when the weather turns just a wee bit crisper and a lot less humid. During early-morning or late-night jaunts, a jacket or a light sweater even comes in handy. Now's certainly the perfect time to indulge in a bit of layering-clothes, that is!

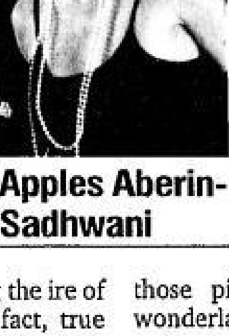
Not only is layering a great way to dress creatively and show off your personality, it's also the perfect way to look fashionable while staying warm and toasty. Although some might say that it's not apt for Manila's tropical climate (even during the colder months), there are various ways to pile on clothes without earning the ire of the fashion police. In fact, true blue fashionistas always manage to look stylishly cool as they wear one item on top of another and yet another.

The good news is that for the holidays, Bench is offering a collection of fun, funky pieces that can be easily mixed, matched and layered. The collection even includes tongue-in-cheek Christmas tees that give off a humorous vibe. So, there's a little something for everyone—naughty girls included!

Of course, it helps to remember a few simple rules when layering clothes. Start off by choosing pieces that are made of lightweight materials like cotton, silk, satin, jersey or even light denims. Please do away with extra-heavy knits or wools that will only confine and suffocate. Not to mention, add bulk you don't really need. Unless you're supermodel-thin and can actually afford the extra girth, save those pieces for some winter wonderland in a far-flung locale.

Next, play around with proportions. Choose items of different lengths to create points of interest and contrasts. A bolero will

APPLES' PICKINGS



Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

HOLIDAY/ H2

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Smiles will light up their faces when you share a beautiful memory printed instantly on a SELPHY Photo Printer! Just connect the camera, select your image, and print. And it's easy to spread the happiness because SELPHY printers are compatible with any PictBridge or Canon Direct digital camera. You can print from memory cards, or even wirelessly via an IrDA connection or from your Bluetooth-enabled camera phone or PDA*. More connections mean more fun! Now get connected to a SELPHY Photo Printer and make someone happy!

*Bluetooth printing requires optional adapter.

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- Affordable Prints
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PictBridge
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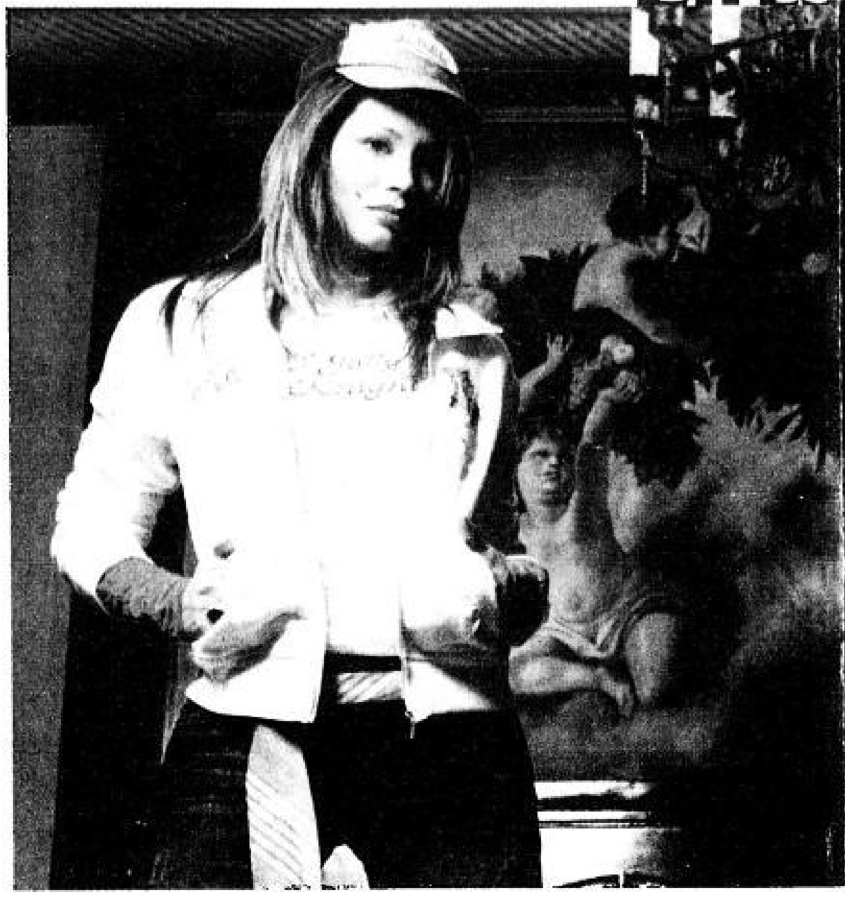
Canon Marketing (Philippines), Inc. 2/F Marvin Plaza, 2153 Don Chino Roces Ave. cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City. Tel: 844 9000 Fax: 810 9797 E-mail: info@canon.com.ph or www.canon.com.ph



Good girl in nice wrapping

Tee with pink piping (P299.75), black zip-up jacket with hoodie (P899.75), denim mini skirt embroidery (P699.75)—all by Her Bench/Bench

Holiday layers

From page H1

look great with a long tank top.

Color also plays an important part when layering. Bold contrasting or complementary colors are fun and funky when worn together. But if you're too timid to play around with attention-grabbing hues, try combining monochromatic colors that blend subtly but look just as attractive.

You can also accentuate your fashionably layered look with up-to-the-minute accessories like belts (thick or thin, on the waist or the hips), scarves, necklaces or chokers, bangles, stockings and the like.

Go ahead and experiment with different looks and remember, when you start to feel that chill in the air (and even if you don't!), try a bit of layering for a whole lot of fashion fun!

E-mail the author at afashion@inquirer.com.ph

Tee with piping (P299.75) and black jacket with embroidery (P899.75)—both by Her Bench/Bench

ANTON MENDOZA

ED & KATRINA FEIST

ALYANNA MARTINEZ

NIKKI TEODORO-PRIETO

DOMINIQUE COJUANGCO

TESSA PRIETO-VALDES

MARIO KATIGBAK

PAM GONZALES

KELLY MISA

ROBBY MANANQUIL & VALERIE DELOS SANTOS

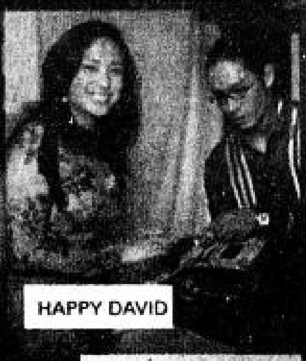
JOANNE PRIMERO

JACQUES DUPASQUIER

ELBERT & LIZA CUENCA

KATE TORRALBA

HINDY WEBER-TANTOCO



HAPPY DAVID

ANNE GONZALES

ABBA MAPA

AIMEE MARCOS & JM RODRIGUEZ

RONALD PINEDA

MOTOROLA COUNTRY MANAGER PATRICK ARONSON w/ WIFE HA

DAPHNE OSENA PAEZ

CHING CRUZ

MALOU PINEDA, EMMAN PINEDA

TESSA DRAGON

SHU UEMURA'S TINA TINIO AND MOTOROLA'S MARI LITONJUA

THE SUPER DUO BEHIND THE SUCCESSFUL "BEYOND LIMITS. BEYOND WONDERS."

MOTOKRZR

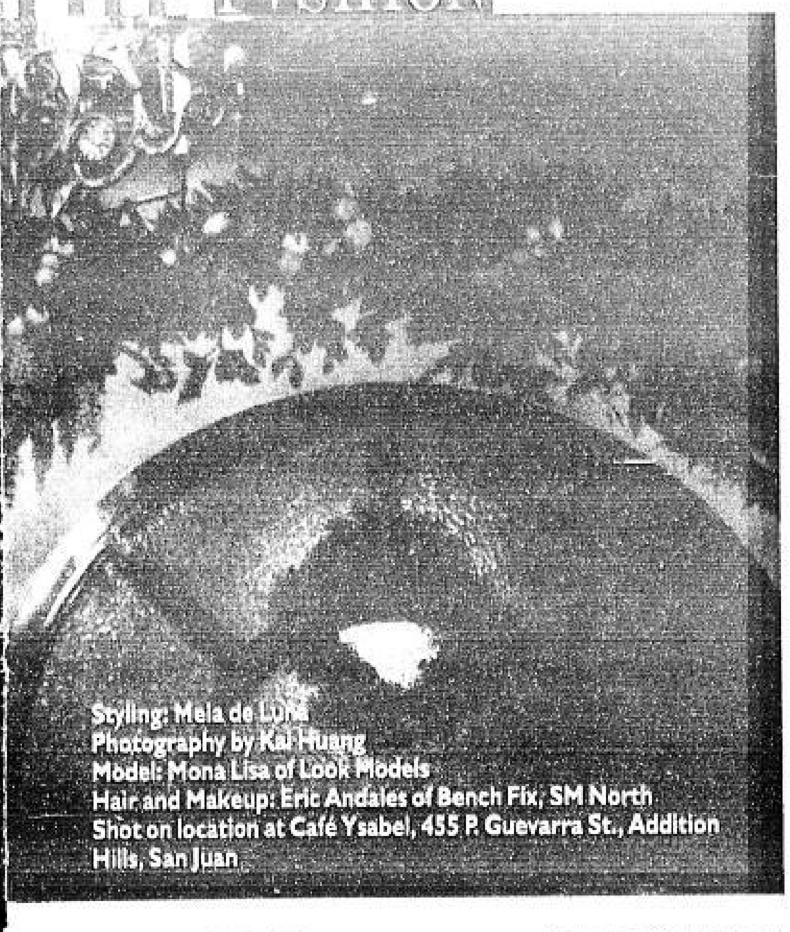
BEYOND LIMITS BEYOND WONDERS

Redefining the meaning of synergy and the luxurious lifestyle, Motorola has partnered with Shu Uemura, Smart Infinity and Japan Airlines in presenting the newest innovations in beauty, technology and service.

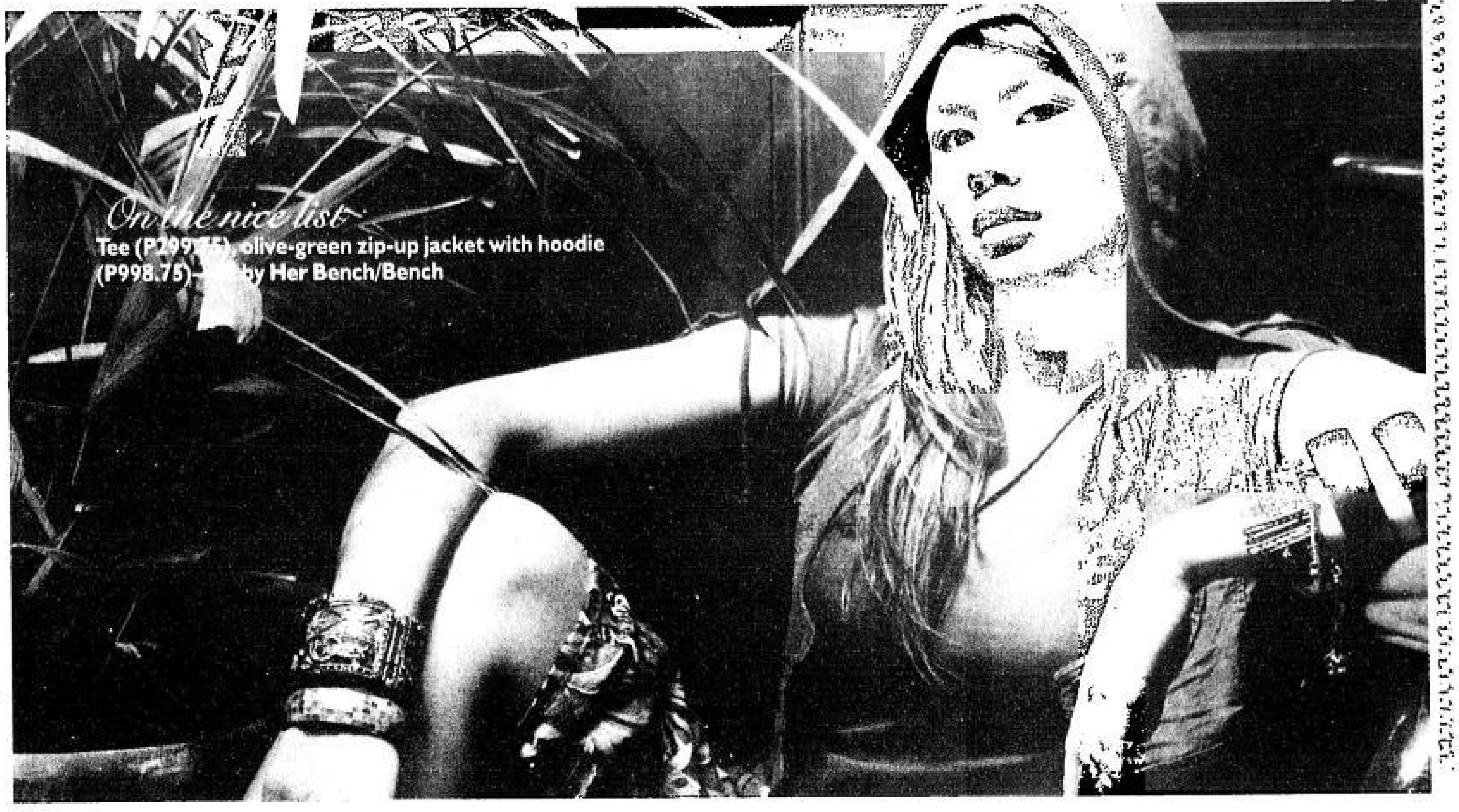
In a glamorous and glittering evening at the Rockwell Tent, tagged as "BEYOND LIMITS. BEYOND WONDER.", attended by the who's who of the Philippines and with the cooperation of Team Manila and Evenstcape, Motorola launched its most fashionable phone yet—the evolutionary MOTOKRZR.

Reaching a new level of fashionable technology, the time has come for that hot new look. Making a bold statement with a slender form with brilliantly reflective high-gloss blue metal and glass surface, one hundred units of the stunningly good looking MOTOKRZR were awarded on that infinite night of awe and wonder. A perfect balance of design, craftsmanship and functionality, the MOTOKRZR fuses a compact, alluring, perfectly proportioned design with top-of-the line features that meet all of your mobile communication needs.

Truly unprecedented, Motorola takes off to a higher level in the world of true elegance and cutting-edge technology with the MOTOKRZR.



Styling: Mela de Luna
Photography by Kai Huang
Model: Mona Lisa of Look Models
Hair and Makeup: Eric Andales of Bench Fix, SM North
Shot on location at Café Ysabel, 455 P. Guevarra St., Addition Hills, San Juan



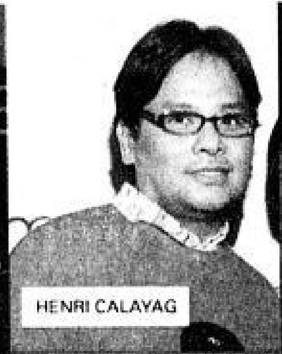
On the nice list
Tee (P299.75), olive-green zip-up jacket with hoodie (P998.75)—all by Her Bench/Bench

CARISSA COSCOLLUELA

JOJI DINGCONG

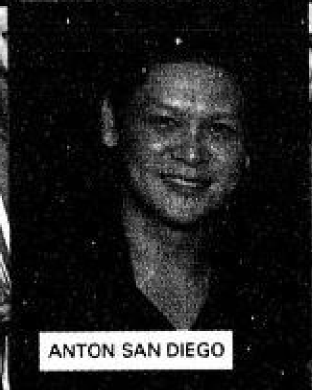
LOUIE YSMAEL

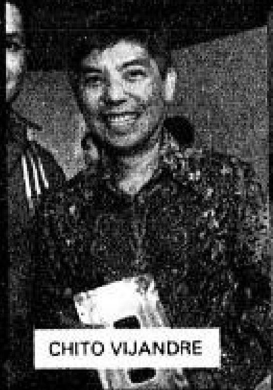
GILBERT & GEORGINA REMULLA


HENRI CALAYAG

BEA LEDESMA

LEAH PUYAT


ANTON SAN DIEGO


CHITO VIJANDRE

CECILE ZAMORA VAN STRATEN

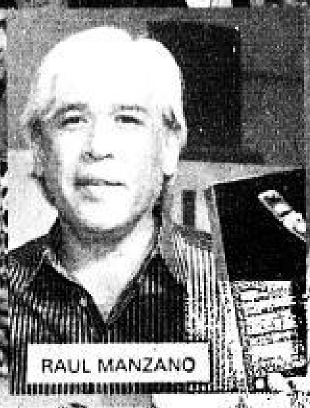
GP REYES & CHICO SUAREZ

DJ MONTANO

CRICKET TANTOCO, SIGALIT DJEMAL, MIA BORROMEO

ASTRUD CRISOLOGO

JOANNA PREYSLEY


RAUL MANZANO

PAOLO & RIA PRIETO

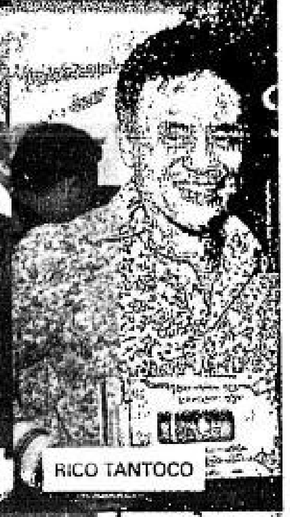
APPLES ABERIN-SADHWANI

MICHAEL SALIENTES

XANDER ANGELES

MIMI TAN

PEPPER TEEHANKEE


RICO TANTOCO

MAURICE ARCACHE

MYRZA SISON

JR ISAAC

RAJO LAUREL

PHILIP CU-UNJIENG

RUBY GAN

CELINE LOPEZE

MIKE TOLEDO

LUCY TORRES

NOELLE HERNANDEZ

IPE CRUZ, CIARA SEVILLA, TALS DIAZ

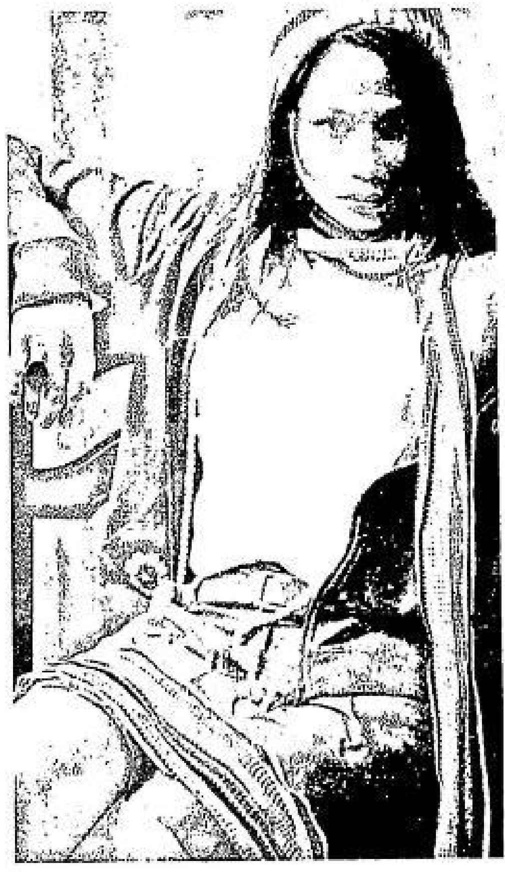
GRETCHEN BARRETO & TIM YAP

BLEDES FORES

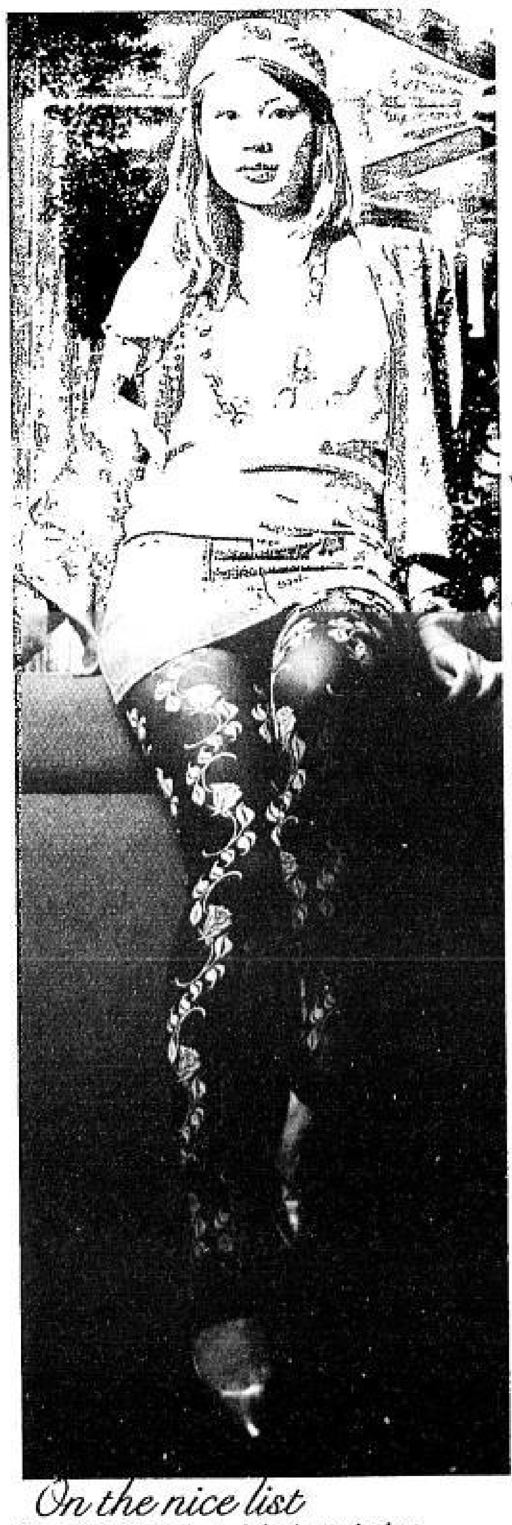
XENG ZULUETA

JIGGER ANTONIO

Color also plays an important part when layering. Bold contrasting or complementary colors are fun and funky when worn together



Santa's baby
Tee with semi-puffed sleeves (P329.75), olive-green drawstring skirt (P599.75), hooded olive green jacket with embroidery (P998.75)—all by Her Bench/Bench



On the nice list
Tee (P299.75), hot pink zip-up jacket (P998.75) and denim mini skirt with embroidery (P699.75)—all by Her Bench/Bench. Gold pumps (P1,995) by Janylin

Hot, hot eyewear

FLYWEAR, A LEADING NAME IN eyewear, unveils a new collection defined by cat's eye frames, aviators, and other quirky, eye-catching pieces.

The classic Jackie O sunglasses becomes modernized with funky encrustments on the frames. Flywear's take on the aviator, meanwhile, recalls street grit and glam.

These classic frames with unconventional touches come in polished browns, sleek blacks and stark whites.

Flywear is available at The 50th Avenue, Alabang Town Center, Eastwood Cybermall, Ever Commonwealth, Festival Supermall, Malabon CitiSquare, Nepo Mall, Robinsons Angeles, The 50th Avenue, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Lipa, Riverbanks Center, SM Batangas, SM Clark, SM Dasmariñas, SM Fairview, SM Lipa, SM Lucena, SM Mall of Asia, SM Manila, SM Marilao, SM Megamall, SM Molino, SM North Edsa, SM San Lazaro, SM Sta. Mesa, SM Sta. Rosa, SM Pampanga, SM Southmall, SM City Sucat, SM Valenzuela, Sta. Lucia East, Waltermart Calamba and Waltermart Plaridel.

ISABEL Oli looks cool in Flywear.

SEEING gold

BROWN-EYED girl

Christmas Luxury Package

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- 15% discount for a 1-hour massage at Suriya Spa
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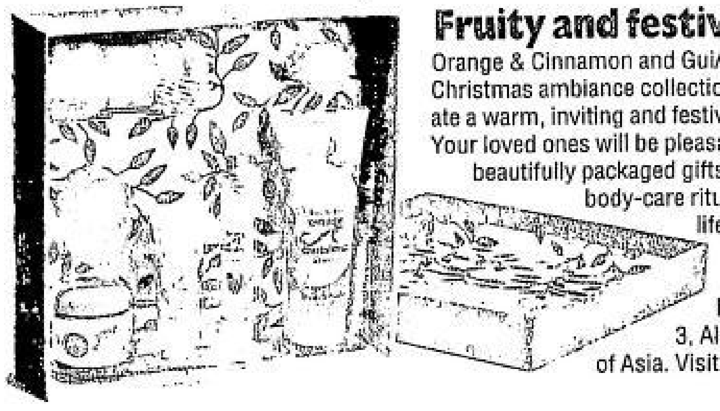
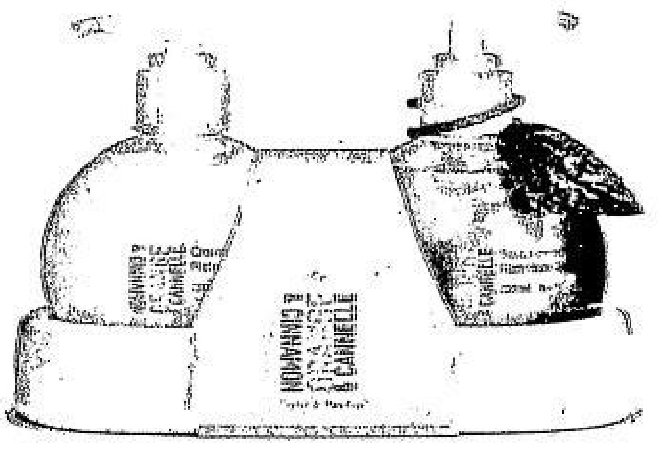
e) or 283 (Smart)

The scents of Christmas



Fruity and festive

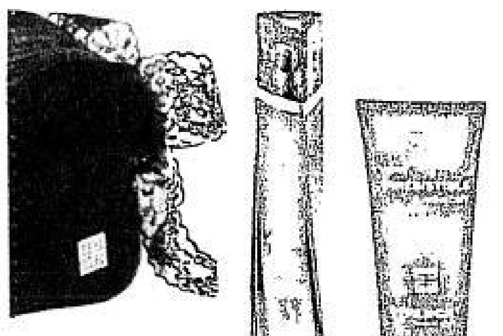
Orange & Cinnamon and Gui/Mistletoe are two exclusive Christmas ambiance collections from Fruits & Passion that create a warm, inviting and festive ambiance in every home. Your loved ones will be pleasantly surprised by the original and beautifully packaged gifts of Fruits & Passion perfumed body-care rituals, home ambiance and kitchen lifestyle products. In the Philippines, Fruits & Passion is exclusively distributed by Stores Specialists, Inc. and is located at the Greenbelt 3, Alabang Town.Center and SM Mall of Asia. Visit www.fruits-passion.com.



CINNAMON
ORANGE
& CANNELLE

Simply irresistible

Very Irresistible Givenchy, the fragrance that originates from the seductive notes of star anise and verbana leaves, comes with a very irresistible gift set just for this holiday season. The special Very Irresistible Givenchy Gift Set comes with a 75-ml Very Irresistible Givenchy EDT Spray, 100-ml Body Lotion and 100-ml Body Gel . Hollywood star Liv Tyler represents the spontaneity, impertinence, daring and sensuality evoked by the scent. Available at Givenchy fragrance counters in leading department stores nationwide and exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp.



Gift with purchase

Dunhill, the ultimate fragrance for the true gentleman, offers a free weekend bag for ever P3,950 worth of purchases from its store counters. Available only until supply lasts, Dunhill's navy-blue twill weekend bag is the perfect carry-all for an overnight or day trip. Choose between Dunhill Pure and Dunhill Fresh. Dunhill Pure with its icy blue overtones opens with the energetic, brisk freshness of lotus leaves, enhanced by the stimulating vigor of white pepper and cardamom. Deeper into the fragrance, water iris revitalizes and balances the sensual effect of smoldering patchouli. Dunhill Fresh announces itself with crisp and clean overtones, blending a refined character with a lasting impression of basil, freesia and green notes. The cool aqua color gives an immediate visual impression of irresistible refreshment. Dunhil fragrances, exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp., are sold at all leading department stores.

PRECIOUS Eau de Toilette has top notes of bergamot, melon, apple, and cinnamon. Middle notes include magnolia, violet, rose, white muguet and jasmine; while base notes are amber, raspberry and musk leave an unforgettable impression. Precious is distributed by Fuller Life Direct Selling, Inc.

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FREE BLUETOOTH PRINTING
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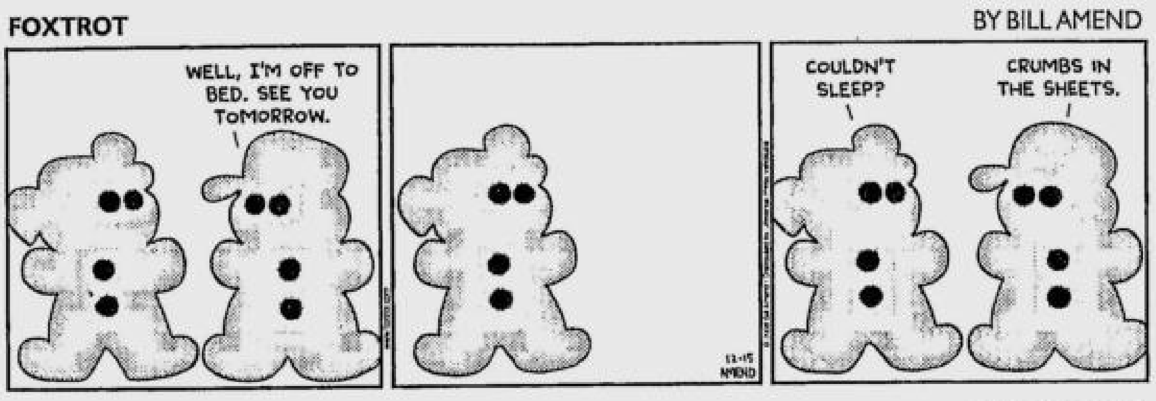
December 11-17, 2006, SM North EDSA, The Block - Activity Center

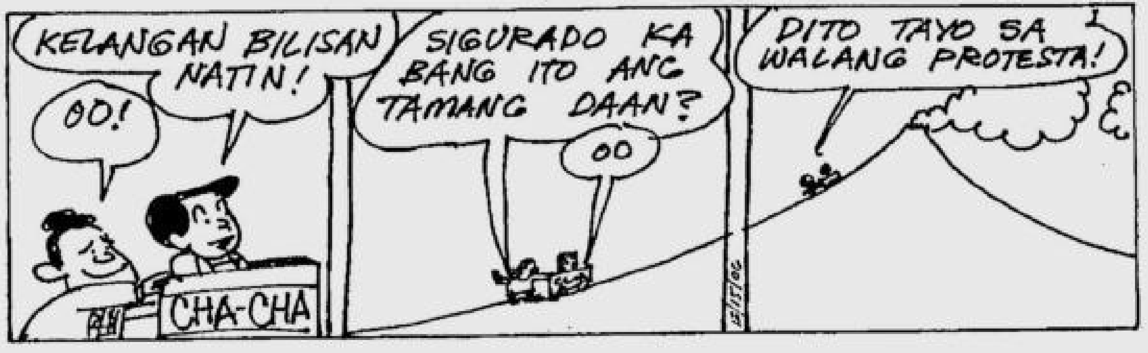
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WELL, I'M OFF TO BED. SEE YOU TOMORROW.
COULDN'T SLEEP?
CRUMBS IN THE SHEETS.
12-15 AMEND

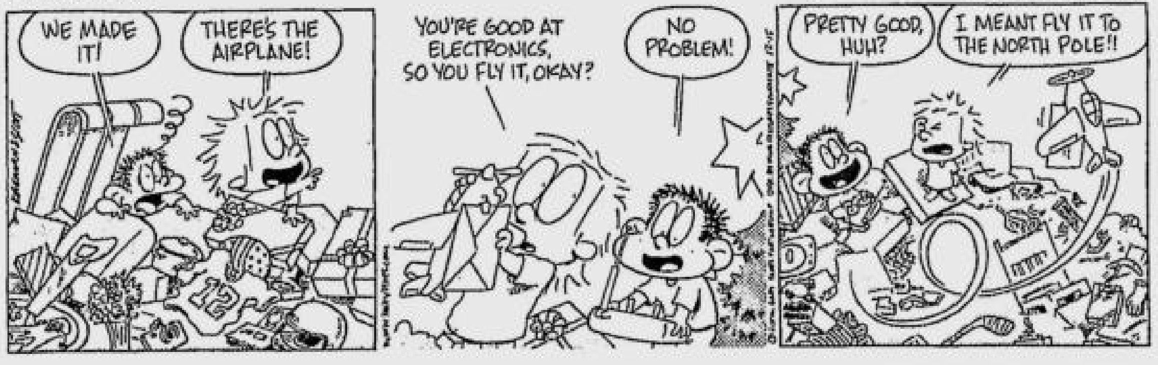
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


KELANGAN BILISAN NATIN!
OO!
CHA-CHA
SIGURADO KA BANG ITO ANG TAMANG DAAN?
OO
DITO TAYO SA WALANG PROTESTA!

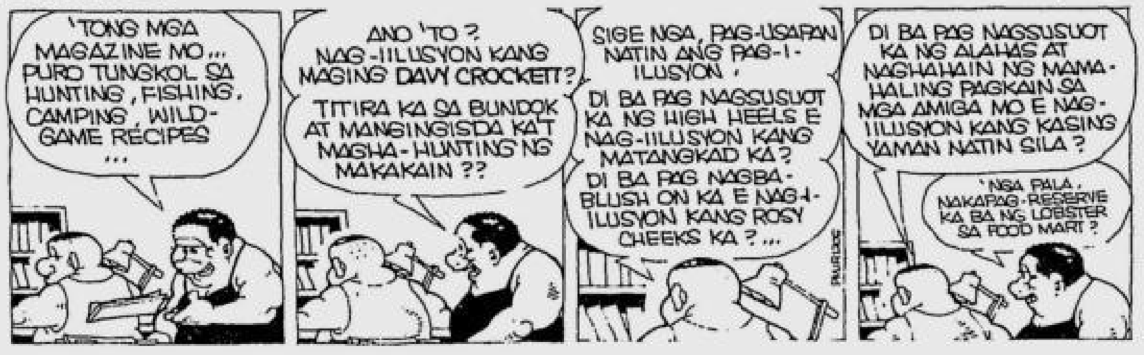
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WE MADE IT!
THERE'S THE AIRPLANE!
YOU'RE GOOD AT ELECTRONICS, SO YOU FLY IT, OKAY?
NO PROBLEM!
PRETTY GOOD, HUH?
I MEANT FLY IT TO THE NORTH POLE!!

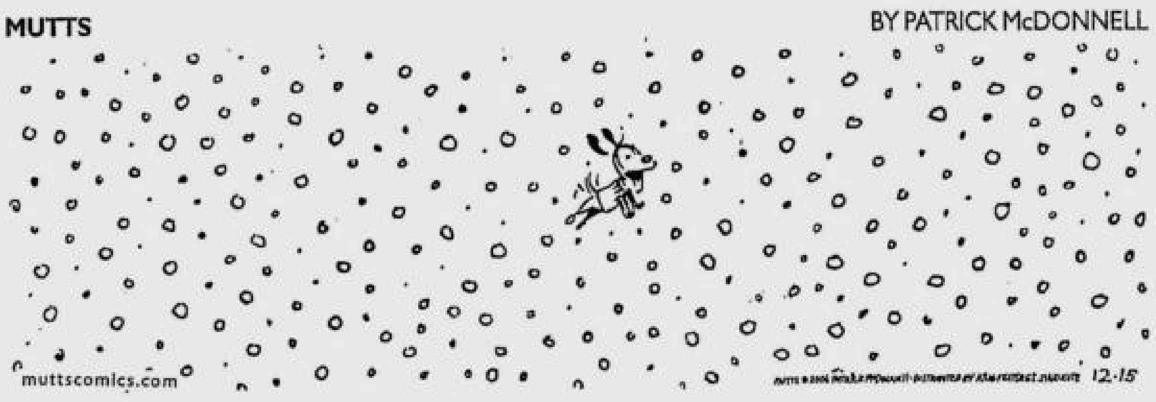
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


'TONG MGA MAGAZINE MO... PURO TUNGKOL SA HUNTING, FISHING, CAMPING, WILD-GAME RECIPES ...
ANO 'TO? NAG-IILUSYON KANG MAGING DAVY CROCKETT?
TITIRA KA SA BUNDOK AT MANGINGISDA KAT MAGHA-HUNTING NG MAKAKAIN??
SIGE NGA, PAG-USAPAN NATIN ANG PAG-I-ILUSYON,
DI BA PAG NAGSUSUOT KA NG HIGH HEELS E NAG-IILUSYON KANG MATANGKAD KA?
DI BA PAG NAGBA-BLUSH ON KA E NAG-I-ILUSYON KANG ROSY CHEEKS KA?...
DI BA PAG NAGSUSUOT KA NG ALAHAS AT NAGHAHAIN NG MAMA-HALING PAGKAIN SA MGA AMIGA MO E NAG-IILUSYON KANG KASING YAMAN NATIN SILA?
'NGA PALA, NAKAPAG-RESERVE KA BA NG LOBSTER SA FOOD MART?

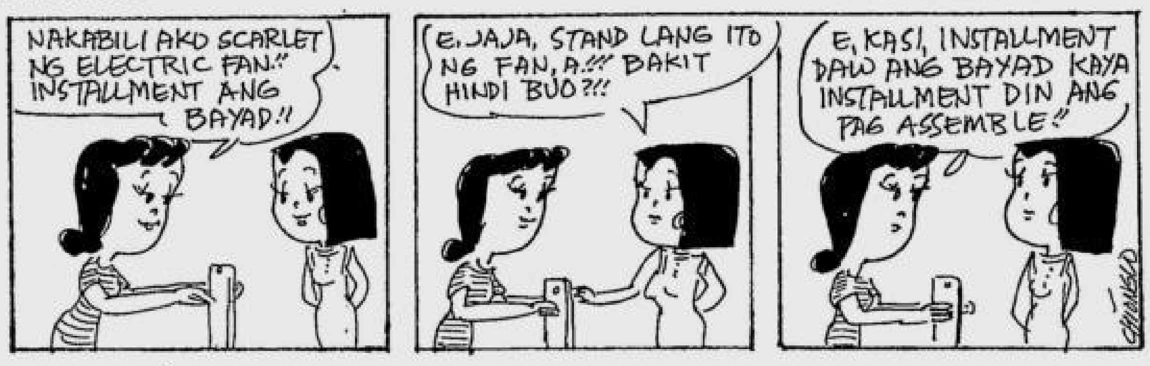
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


muttscomics.com
12-15

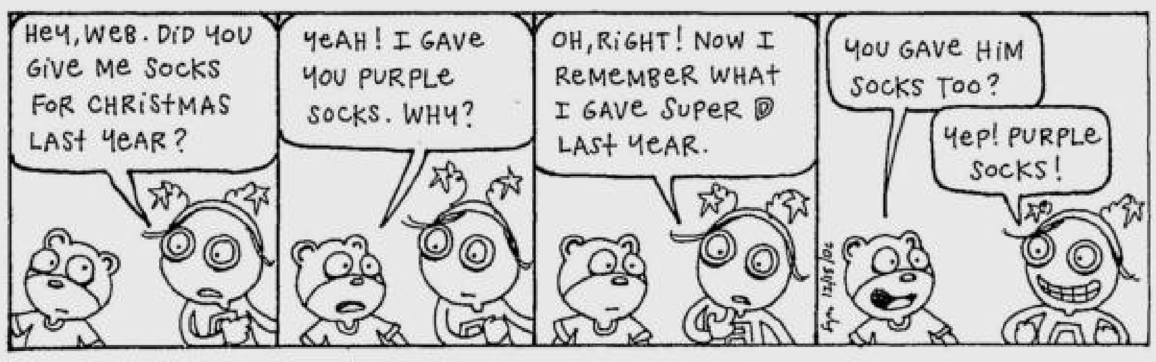
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NAKABILI AKO SCARLET NG ELECTRIC FAN!" INSTALLMENT ANG BAYAD!!
E, JAJA, STAND LANG ITO NG FAN, A!!! BAKIT HINDI BUO?!!
E, KASI, INSTALLMENT DAW ANG BAYAD KAYA INSTALLMENT DIN ANG PAG ASSEMBLE!"
CHIONGLO

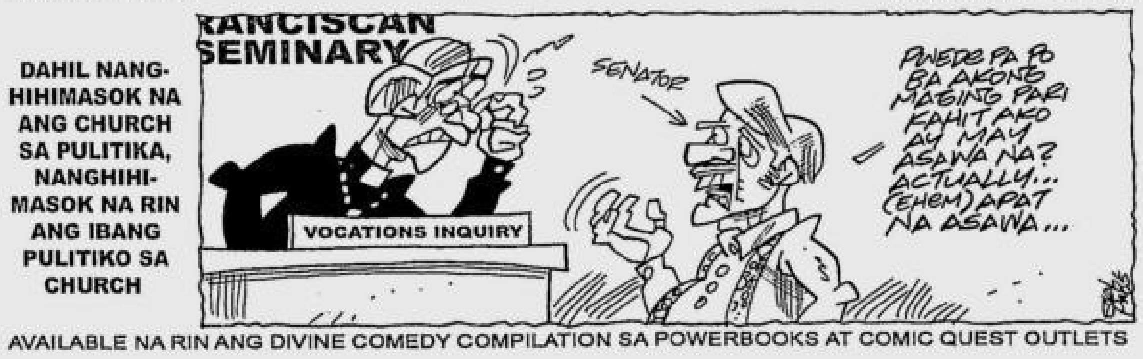
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, WeB. DiD you Give me Socks For CHRistmas LAST yeAR?
yeAH! I GAVE you PURPLE SOCKS. WHy?
OH, RiGHT! Now I Remember WHAT I GAVE Super D LAST yeAR.
You GAVE HiM Socks Too?
yep! PURPLE Socks!

DIVINE COMEDY

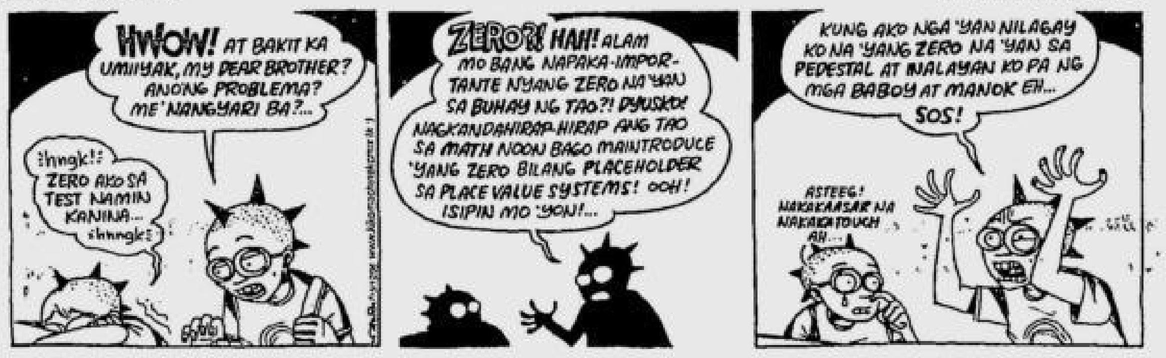
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DAHIL NANG-HIHIMASOK NA ANG CHURCH SA PULITIKA, NANGHIHI-MASOK NA RIN ANG IBANG PULITIKO SA CHURCH
RANCISCAN SEMINARY
SENATOR
VOCATIONS INQUIRY
PWEDE PA PO BA AKONG MAGING PARI KAHIT AKO AY MAY ASAWA NA? ACTUALLY... (EHEM) APAT NA ASAWA...

AVAILABLE NA RIN ANG DIVINE COMEDY COMPILATION SA POWERBOOKS AT COMIC QUEST OUTLETS

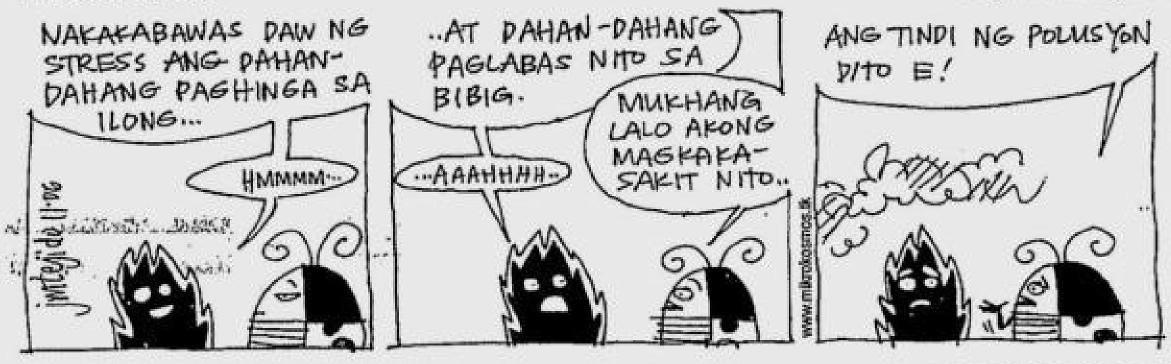
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOW! AT BAKIT KA UMIIYAK, MY DEAR BROTHER? ANONG PROBLEMA? ME' NANGYARI BA?...
!hngk!! ZERO AKO SA TEST NAMIN KANINA... shnngk!
ZERO?! HAH! ALAM MO BANG NAPAKA-IMPOR-TANTE NYANG ZERO NA 'YAN SA BUHAY NG TAO?! DYUSKO! NAGKANDAHIRAP-HIRAP ANG TAO SA MATH NOON BAGO MAINTRODUCE 'YANG ZERO BILANG PLACEHOLDER SA PLACE VALUE SYSTEMS! OOH! ISIPIN MO 'YON!...
KUNG AKO NGA 'YAN NILAGAY KO NA 'YANG ZERO NA 'YAN SA PEDESTAL AT INALAYAN KO PA NG MGA BABOY AT MANOK EH...
SOS!
ASTEEG! NAKAKAASAR NA NAKAKATOUCH AH...

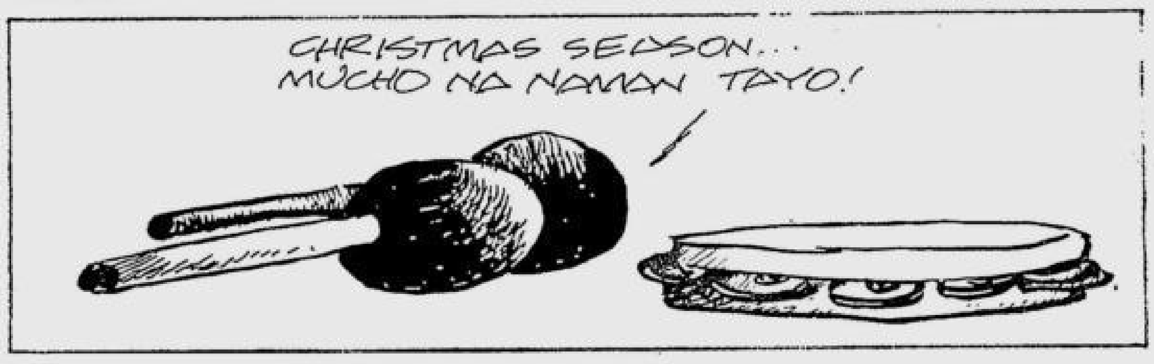
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKAKABAWAS DAW NG STRESS ANG DAHAN-DAHANG PAGHINGA SA ILONG...
HMMMM...
..AT DAHAN-DAHANG PAGLABAS NITO SA BIBIG.
...AAAHHHH...
MUKHANG LALO AKONG MAGKAKA-SAKIT NITO...
ANG TINDI NG POLUSYON DITO E!
www.mikrokosmos.tk

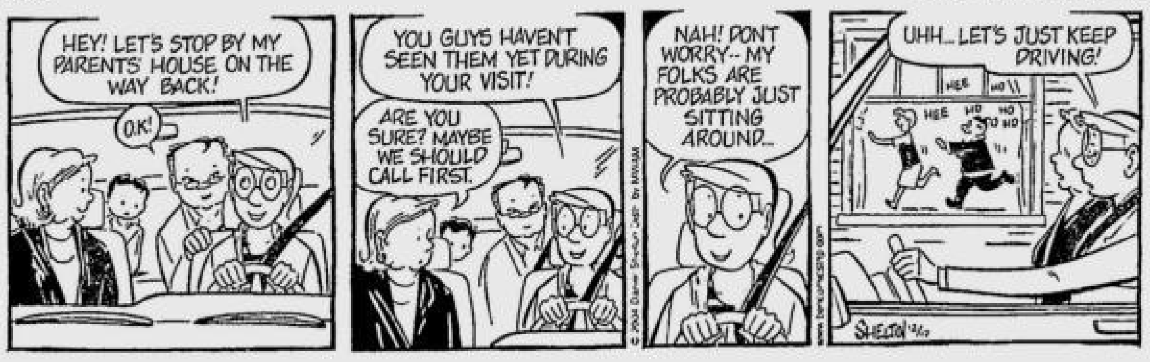
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


CHRISTMAS SEASON... MUCHO NA NAMAN TAYO!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HEY! LET'S STOP BY MY PARENTS' HOUSE ON THE WAY BACK!
OK!
YOU GUYS HAVEN'T SEEN THEM YET DURING YOUR VISIT!
ARE YOU SURE? MAYBE WE SHOULD CALL FIRST.
NAH! DON'T WORRY-- MY FOLKS ARE PROBABLY JUST SITTING AROUND...
UHH... LET'S JUST KEEP DRIVING!
HEE HO HO HO
SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	■	9	10	11	12	13
14				■	15				■	16				
17				18					■	19				
20						■	21		22		■	23		
■	■	■	24			25	■	26			27		■	■
28	29	30					31	■	32				33	34
35			■	36				37		■	38			
39			40		■	41			■	42				
43				■	44				45		■	46		
47				48		■	49				50			
■	■	51				52	■	53				■	■	■
54	55		■	56			57	■	58			59	60	61
62			63		■	64		65						
66					■	67				■	68			
69					■	70				■	71			

By Leonard Williams
Fort Wayne, IN
12/15/06

ACROSS
1 Large amount
5 Okinawa port
9 Collar attachment
14 River of Pisa
15 Way to Rome
16 Come to terms
17 Postal John Phillips song?
19 "Psycho" setting
20 Snooping
21 Tabula __
23 Record speed?
24 Part of U.A.E.
26 "__ the Greek"
28 Actress Simone
32 CCCP paper
35 Pitcher's stat
36 Somewhat past due
38 Swarm
39 Lube again
41 Fancy marble
42 Actress Diamond
43 Rustic hotels
44 Breakfast pastry
46 Ambulance grp.
47 Threadlike: pref.
49 Drafting tools
51 "__ Never Walk Alone"
53 Rwandan people
54 Typist's stat
56 Search out
58 Former Disney honcho
62 Hoosegow
64 Postal R. Dean Taylor hit?
66 Metric weight
67 Computer nerd
68 Harness part
69 Milk dispenser?
70 First name of 9D
71 Eight: pref.

DOWN
1 Pouches
2 Junk
3 Capp of the comics
4 "The Picture of __ Gray"
5 Falls for honeymooners
6 24-hr. bank
7 Will VIP
8 Bandleader Desi
9 "Ecstasy" star
10 Self-image
11 Postal fiddler's tune?
12 Ooze
13 Ship's tiller
18 Sign up
22 Former frosh
25 Siamese fighting fish
27 Moderate
28 Greenish finch
29 Dunne or Ryan
30 Postal Hoagy Carmichael song?
31 Ex-pitcher Luis
33 "Philadelphia" director
34 Store up
37 Light, brushing sound
40 Aoki of golf
42 Housebound
44 Pineapple firm
45 In need of oil
48 Word used when describing elephants
50 __-Hungarian Empire
52 "Psycho" star
54 Prohibition grp.
55 Walk wearily
57 Leg punch
59 Tiny fraction of a min.
60 Issue forth
61 Vegas rival
63 Wind dir.
65 Married

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

O	K	E	D	■	V	O	C	E	■	P	A	S	H	A
R	A	V	E	■	A	V	O	W	■	A	N	T	E	S
T	H	I	N	K	L	I	K	E	■	I	N	A	N	E
S	N	L	■	A	O	N	E	■	A	L	U	M	N	A
■	■	■	A	R	R	E	S	T	S	■	A	M	A	N
S	H	E	L	L	■	■	■	A	P	P	L	E	■	■
H	I	V	E	■	F	L	U	T	E	S	■	R	O	B
O	F	A	C	T	I	O	N	A	C	T	L	I	K	E
O	I	L	■	I	N	S	E	R	T	■	I	N	R	E
■	■	U	S	A	G	E	■	■	■	V	E	G	A	S
A	M	A	N	■	E	R	U	P	T	E	D	■	■	■
H	O	T	A	I	R	■	N	E	A	T	■	O	R	E
E	M	I	R	S	■	O	F	T	H	O	U	G	H	T
A	M	O	L	E	■	C	I	A	O	■	P	L	E	A
D	A	N	S	E	■	A	X	L	E	■	S	E	A	L

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12/15/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're friendly, breezy, upbeat and definitely popular! Your cheerful countenance is welcome everywhere. You believe in yourself and your own good luck, and this is why people love you. But it's also because you see the goodness in others. In the year ahead, you will give up something you've been involved with for almost a decade.
Birthdate of: Adam Brody, actor; Tim Conway, comedian/actor; Surya Bonaly, figure skater.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Surprising news about politics or religion might catch you off-guard today. Sudden opportunities to travel or get further training also exist now. Grab them!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): New discoveries about shared possessions surprise you today. You thought you knew what was going on, but lo and behold, now you're dealing with this!. Just go with the flow.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a busy, almost nerve-wracking day. Partners and close friends can surprise you now. Don't make rash, impulsive decisions. Go slowly.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): New technology could be introduced to your job. Something surprising takes place today. Perhaps a new coworker is a bit bizarre or unorthodox?

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Exciting, entertaining events will take place today. New love could enter your life. Parents should be extra-vigilant, because this is a slightly accident-prone day for children.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Family discussions can go sideways today. Unexpected company might drop in. Anything could happen on the home front right now. Play it cool.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is a mildly accident-prone day. Take extra precautions when driving or walking. Be careful that you don't blurt out something embarrassing when talking to others. (Oops!)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): The impulse to shopping is likely today. However, it's not a good idea. Leave your money at home, and wait until tomorrow to do some serious spending. (You'll be glad you did.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a stimulating day! You're fascinated by every new phenomenon that you encounter. One thing is certain: Your plans will change. (Oh, yeah.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Bright ideas from out of nowhere are popping up in your mind. Research can really lead to some solid results. You feel a bit restless today. You want to do something different and exciting.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Friends are surprising. You will either meet somebody new and fascinating, or someone you already know will do something quite bizarre. It's not a boring day.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Parents, bosses, teachers and authority figures might catch you off-guard or surprise you in some way today. You think this might be the last straw. You feel like Peter Finch in "Network": "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not gonna take it anymore!"

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

3				9				5
	8			1				7
	1				2		6	4
		4			3			
		1				3		
			5			2		
8	6		9				7	
9				6			8	
1				2				3

Difficulty Level ★★★★
12/15

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

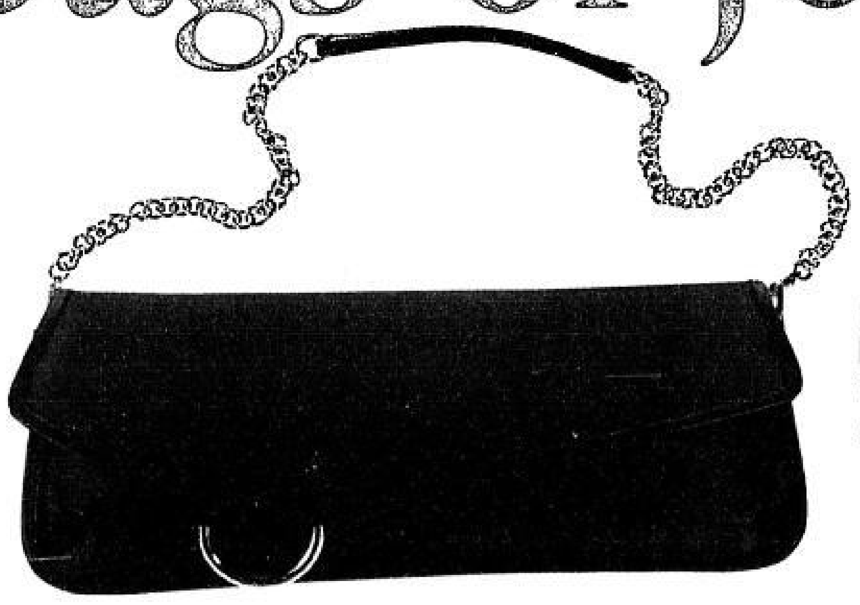
Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

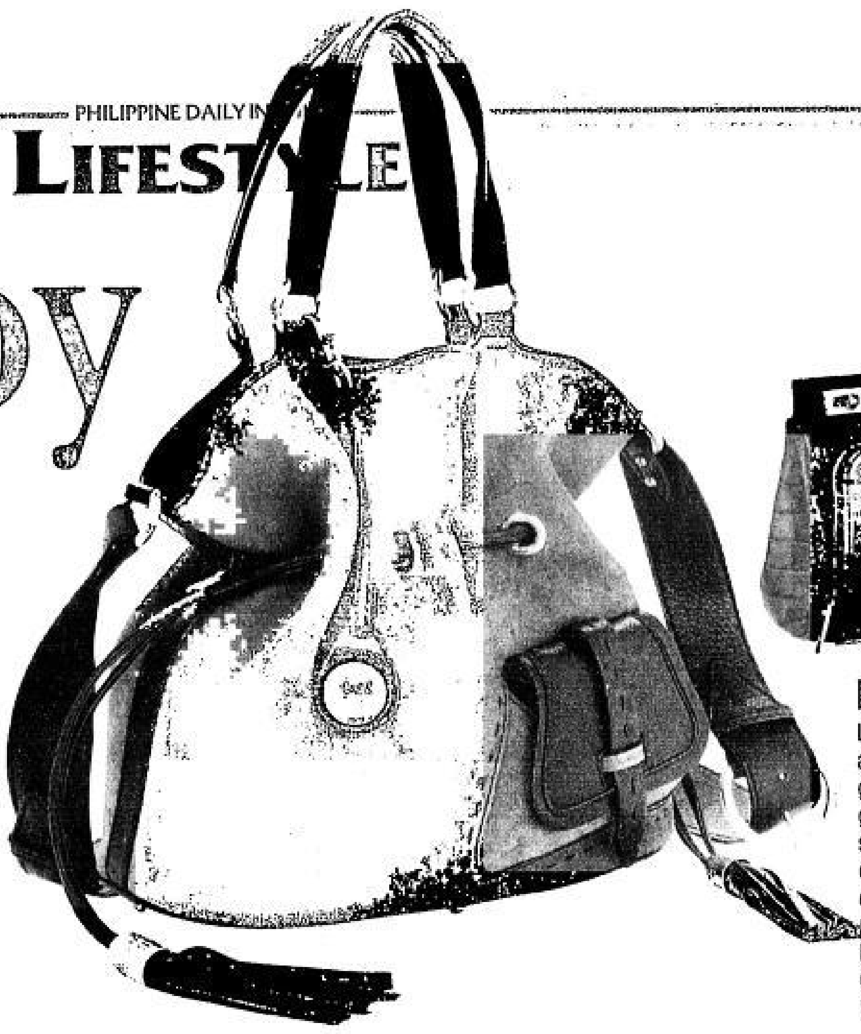
Answer to previous puzzle

6	5	1	4	8	2	9	7	3
9	8	4	7	3	6	1	2	5
7	2	3	5	1	9	8	4	6
4	7	8	3	9	1	6	5	2
1	6	5	8	2	7	3	9	4
3	9	2	6	4	5	7	8	1
5	1	6	9	7	4	2	3	8
2	3	7	1	5	8	4	6	9
8	4	9	2	6	3	5	1	7

Difficulty Level ★★★
12/14

Bags of joy





Parisian flair

Lancel dresses up the holidays with (1) Soir amethyst evening bag in silk satin and lambskin. Or go casual with Lancel's (2) Premier Flirt drawstring grained leather in brass color, or (3) East West shoulder bag of mock crocodile leather in grenade color. Lancel Paris boutiques are exclusively operated by Riviera Retail Inc. Prices are available upon request at the following branches: Lancel Paris boutique, Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong City (tel. 6319775) and Lancel Paris boutique, Glorietta 4, Makati City (8178875).

Rome in your bag

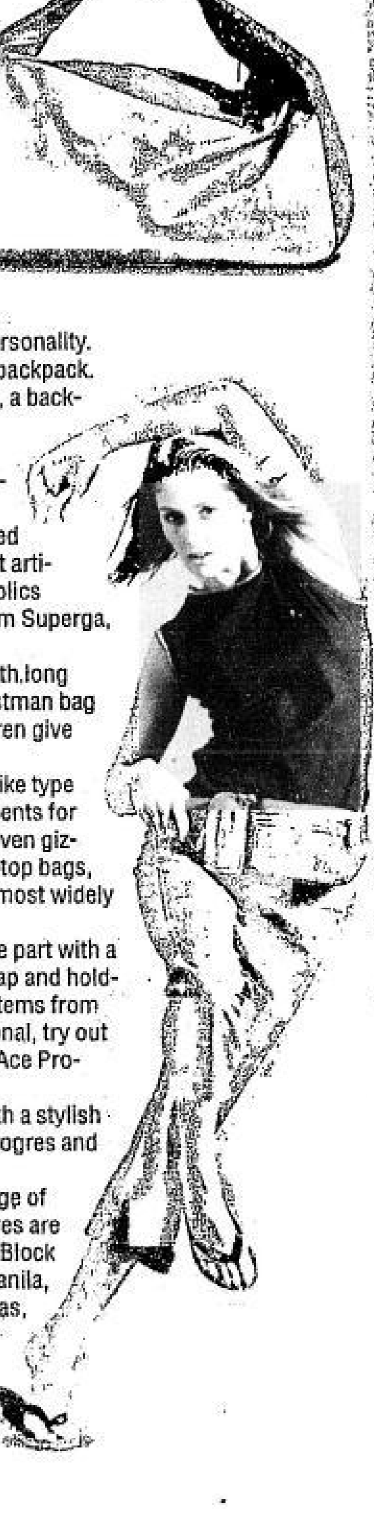
Try your luck and order this limited-edition handbag for the glamorista on your list. Only 200 are being produced, each with a special plate inside that is signed, numbered and inscribed to commemorate the reopening of the Bottega Veneta Rome boutique.

Made of luxuriously soft goatskin (chevre) handcrafted in the house's signature intrecciato style, its luminous brass hue is the result of rare natural pigments and special hand-finishing processes that also render the leather exceedingly soft.

The Roma will be introduced during the boutique's opening celebration in early 2007. For a limited time, it will be available only at that location.

Bottega Veneta shoes, handbags and leather accessories, available at Greenbelt 4, Makati City, is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Stores Specialists, Inc. Call 7576293.

Which bag are you?



Your bag is an extension of your personality. Feeling adventurous? Then grab a backpack. Used by hikers, bikers and runners, a backpack is sometimes supported by lightweight metal frames. For the hippest backpacks, check out Jansport and The North Face.

A shoulder bag is commonly used by women for holding money, toilet articles, and small purchases. Bag-aholics simply love chic shoulder bags from Superga, Ace Progres and Caseman/Hama.

Take off with a postman bag. With long straps worn across the body, a postman bag from Caseman, LA Gear and Hedgren give you a hip, on-the-go image.

If you're the serious, business-like type go for a laptop bag with compartments for computer, documents, discs and even gizmos. When it comes to elegant laptop bags, Victorinox and Samsonite are the most widely loved brands.

If you're the active kind, look the part with a tote bag, an open-top bag with strap and holders that provides easy stuffing of items from Superga. If like going unconventional, try out a chic belt bag from Hedgren and Ace Progres.

Match your athletic persona with a stylish duffle bag from Victorinox, Ace Progres and Hedgren.

Bratpack carries the widest range of fashionable and quality bags. Stores are located at Ayala Center Cebu, The Block at SM City North Edsa, SM City Manila, SM Southmall, SM City Dasmariñas, SM City Davao, SM City Pampanga, SM City Cagayan de Oro, Robinsons Galleria and Robinsons Place Ermita.

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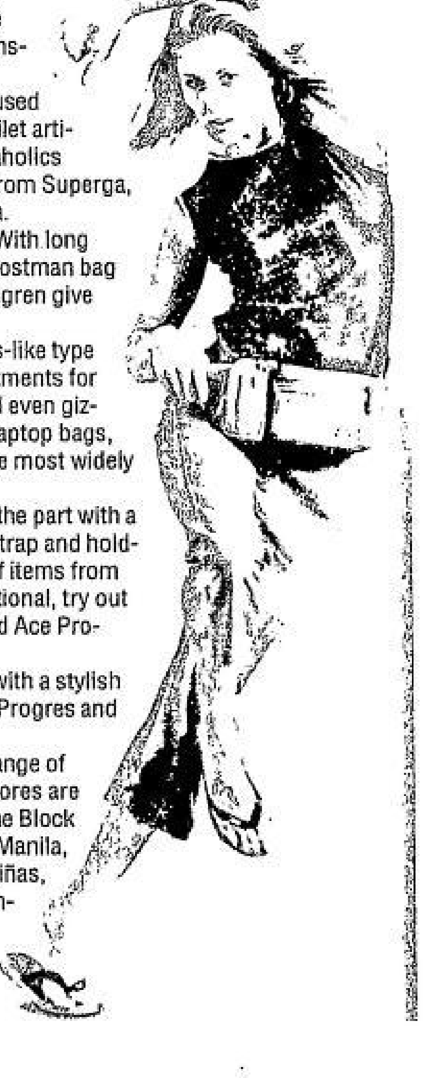

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RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

FOR THE STYLE-SAVVY
Cumbia is the newest hotspot for Manila fashionistas. The brand has everything for the style-savvy, from glittery designer gowns to trendy tops and bottoms and eye-catching accessories all imported from the international fashion circuit. Cumbia is exclusively available at Gateway Mall at the Araneta Center. Visit www.aranetacenter.net.

A DRAMATIC mood sets in this season as French Connection offers fluid sateen tops in sleek satin. Metallics are used in innovative ways: lurex is threaded through knitwear for vintage charm. A beautiful ottoman weave coat is glamorous enough to pass for haute couture. Shoes likewise mirror this mood. FCUK is exclusively available at Rustan's Makati and Rockwell Power Plant Mall.

Bright and merry

LITTLE GIRLS DRESS UP FOR THE holidays at SM!

They're definitely in a celebratory mood as they dazzle in rich jewel tones—ruby red, emerald green, amethyst purple, yellow topaz. There's nothing shy about this collection—colors glow, and organza and silk rustle.

Shapes are full and feminine with bubble skirts giving a fresh look to traditional dresses. Details—ruffles, flowing bow belts, floral appliqués and beadwork—are subtle yet youthfully elegant to bring on the holiday spirit.

The collection is available at the children's wear department of all SM stores.

LIME sleeveless organza dress with floral and bow belt accents

TWO-TONED purple and lilac spaghetti-strapped dress with floral appliqués

FUCHSIA spaghetti-strapped bubble dress with lime bow

Crisp casual chic

CLEAN, COLORFUL AND CRISP PIECES make up the Holiday Collection fashion show with which Marks & Spencer, the largest clothing retailer and a multibillion pound food retailer in the UK, recently opened its 13th store in the Philippines at the SM Mall of Asia.

The new store features the exclusive ranges of women's and men's fashion, accessories and lingerie, as well as food. It offers exclusive brands such as Blue Harbor Vintage, Blue Harbor Classic, Autograph, and renowned UK exclusive menswear designers such as Jeffrey West, Nigel Hall and Timothy Everest.

Standouts in the collection are Autograph suit jackets matched with Autograph long sleeved formal shirt, scarves and ties; Per Una beaded swirl dress, a Sequin Satin trim top in black and red, Per Una crinkle bolero, Jewel Crop pants in black, three-fourths sleeve V-neck in various colors, and Magic Clean bootleg jeans in black.

Marks & Spencer also offers great Christmas packages in its beauty section. Gift sets for women are available in scents of magnolia, rose and lavender, while florentyna carries the fusion of gardenia and jasmine scents.

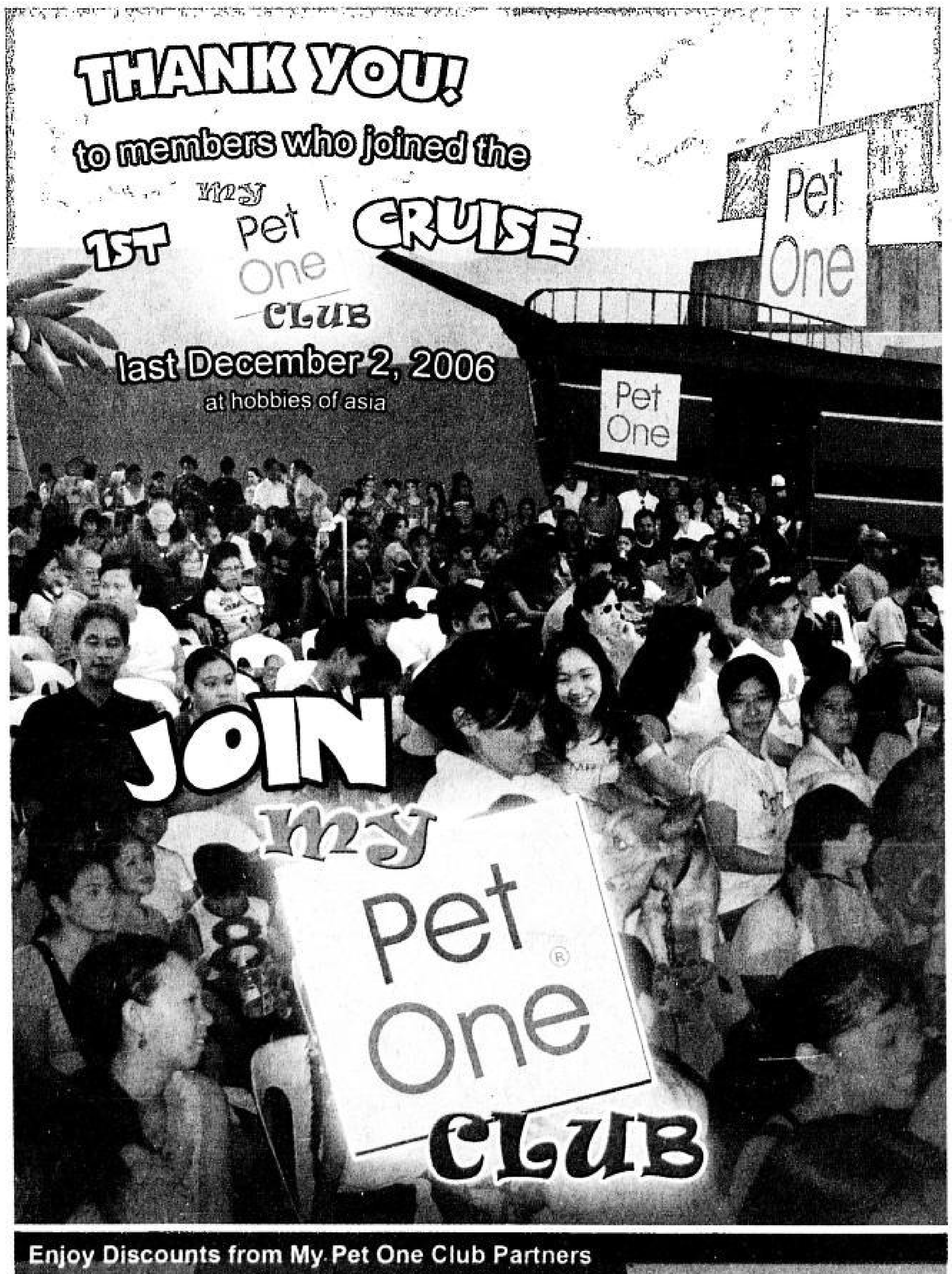
Gift sets for men are filled with favorite toiletries from Isis, Harvard, Autograph and Woodspice. The food and wine gift trays have delectable choices of wine, chocolates, pasta sauces and cookies, among many others.

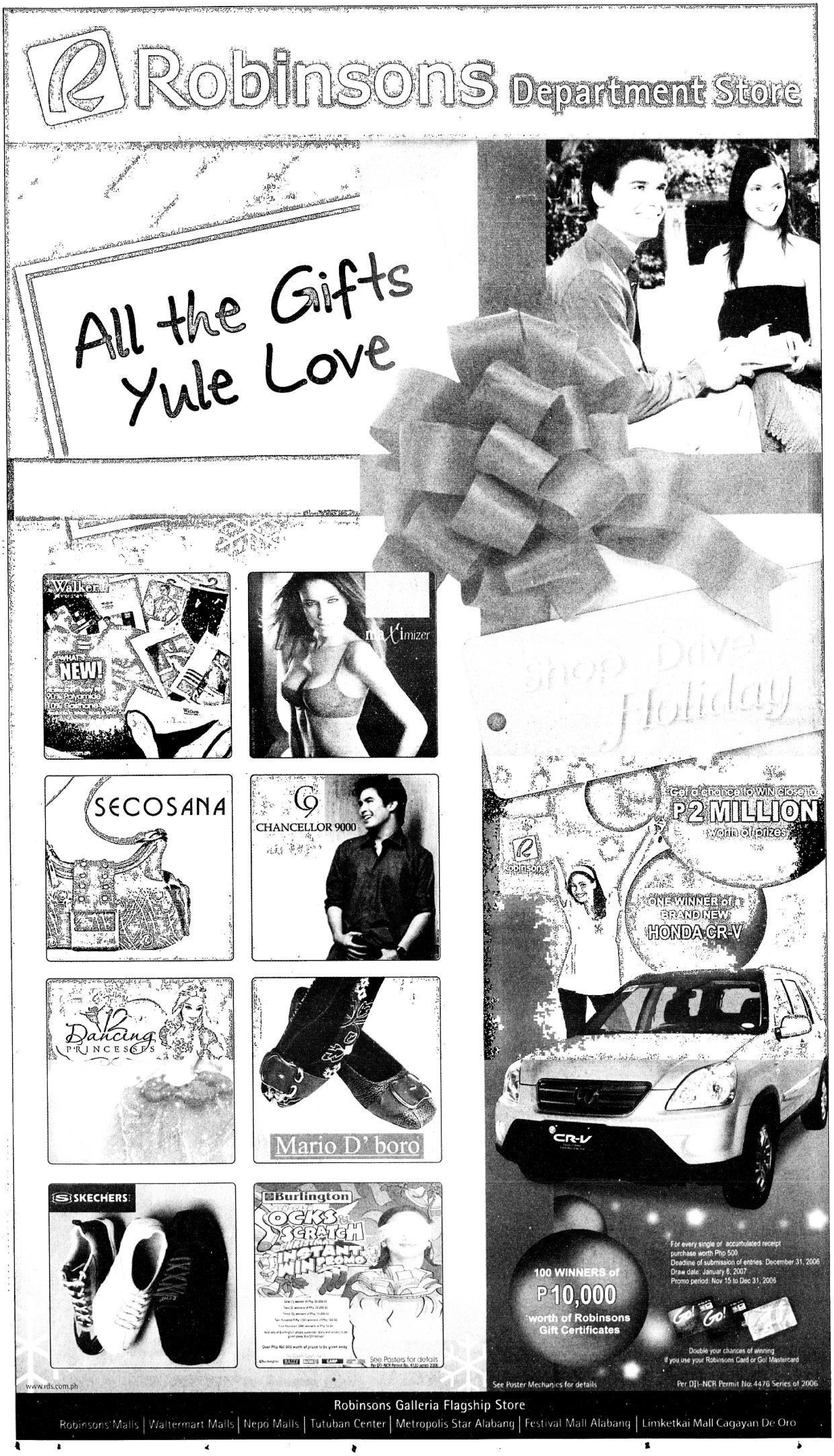
Marks & Spencer stores are located at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 3, Alabang Town Center, Power Plant Mall, SM Megamall, Gateway Mall, SM North Edsa, SM Pampanga, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Manila, Ayala Cebu and SM Mall of Asia.

MARKS & Spencer Sequin Satin trim top, P1,750; plain PVL cropped pants, P2,950

3/4 sleeve shrug top, P1,950; Spot Sash trouser, P3,550

LONG placket coat, P3,950; 3/4 stitch stud V-neck shirt, P1,750; side-zip poly bootleg trouser, P1,550





Robinsons Department Store

All the Gifts Yule Love

Walker

WHAT'S NEW!

maXimizer

SECOSANA

CHANCELLOR 9000

12 Dancing Princesses

Mario D' boro

SKECHERS

Burlington

Socks & Scratch Christmas Instant Win Promo

Over Php 460,000 worth of prizes to be given away

See Posters for details

Shop Drive Holiday

Get a chance to WIN close to

P 2 MILLION

worth of prizes

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ONE WINNER of a BRAND NEW HONDA CR-V

CR-V

100 WINNERS of

P10,000

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For every single or accumulated receipt
purchase worth Php 500
Deadline of submission of entries: December 31, 2006
Draw date: January 8, 2007
Promo period: Nov 15 to Dec 31, 2006

Double your chances of winning
If you use your Robinsons Card or Go! Mastercard

See Poster Mechanics for details

Per DTI-NCR Permit No: 4476 Series of 2006

www.rds.com.ph

Robinsons Galleria Flagship Store

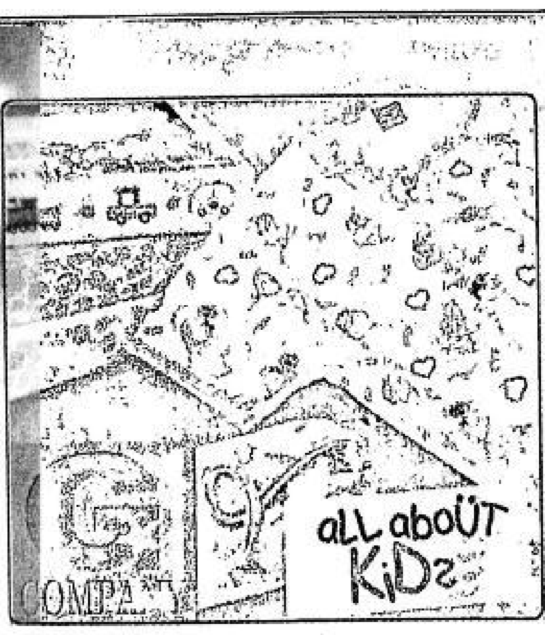
Robinsons Malls | Waltermart Malls | Nepo Malls | Tutuban Center | Metropolis Star Alabang | Festival Mall Alabang | Limketkai Mall Cagayan De Oro

J-2

Robinsons
Department Store

The Winded Horse
IRDY

Springtime's
Baby Line


COMPA
aLL abOUT KiDz

Pre-Christmas Sale

Dec 15*, 16 & 17, 2006

up to 50% off on selected items

*up to 12 midnight

WIN every 3 hours!

GRIZZLY JUNIORS
G-CUBS
GRIZZLY

Established 1936
Harvard
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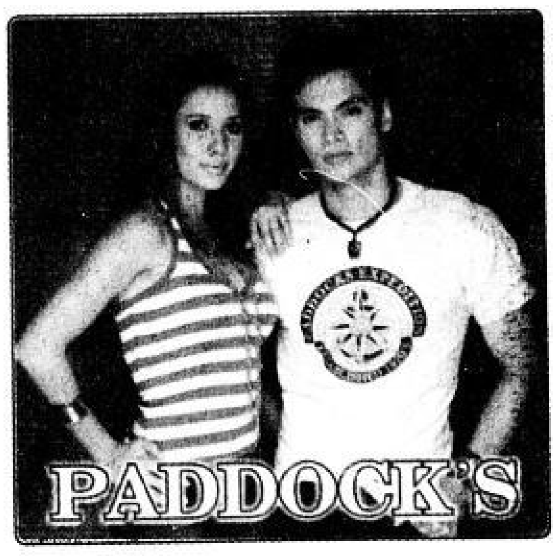
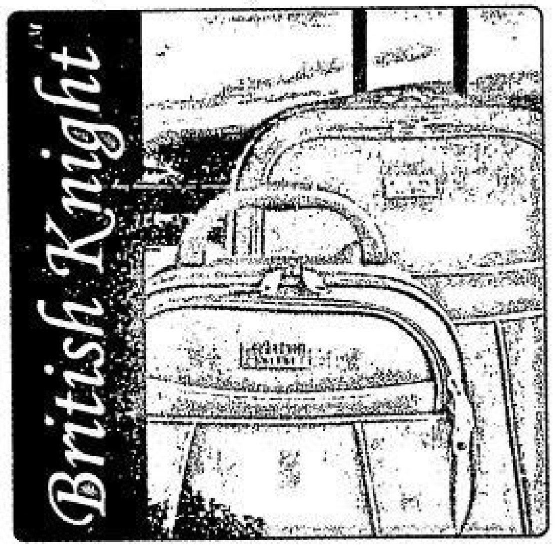
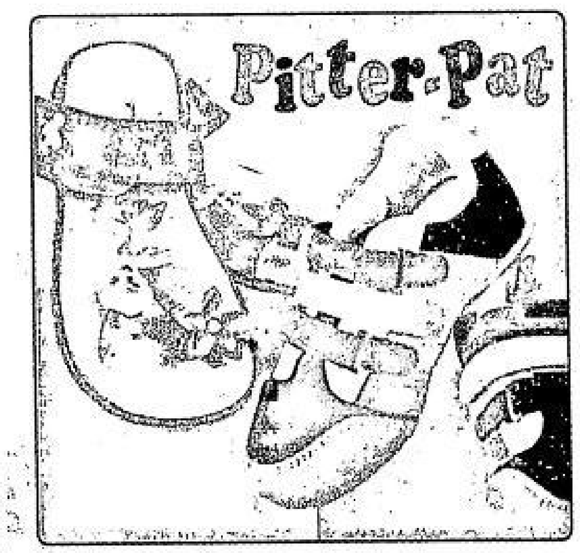
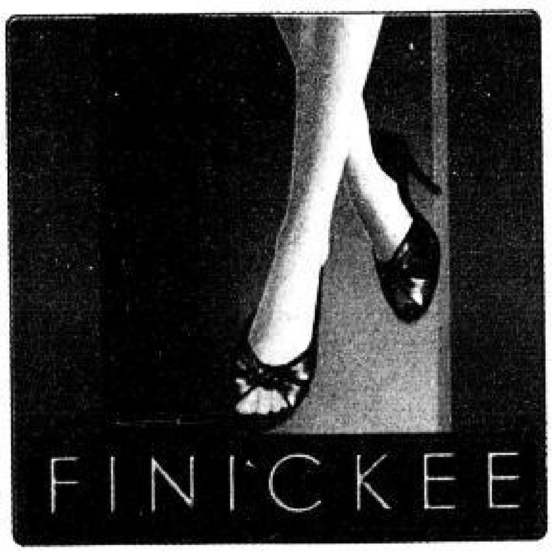
Cambridge, Massachusetts




British Knight



FLORSHEIM USA
KIDS
18



JAZZ
FOOTWEAR

DARLINGTON
Microfiber

Hawaiian sun
sunglasses

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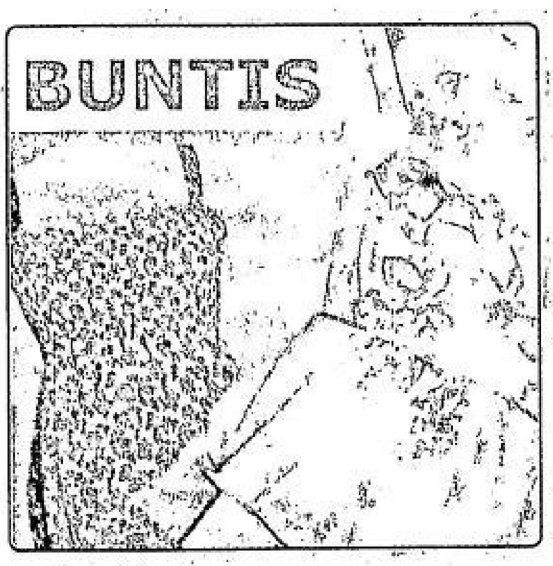

crissa
Redgirl

shale
all about kids
G

MAKE HISTORY
1809
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Lee
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JAG

Company B
-JEANS BRAND-

VIERA
Wrangler

KINGSMEN
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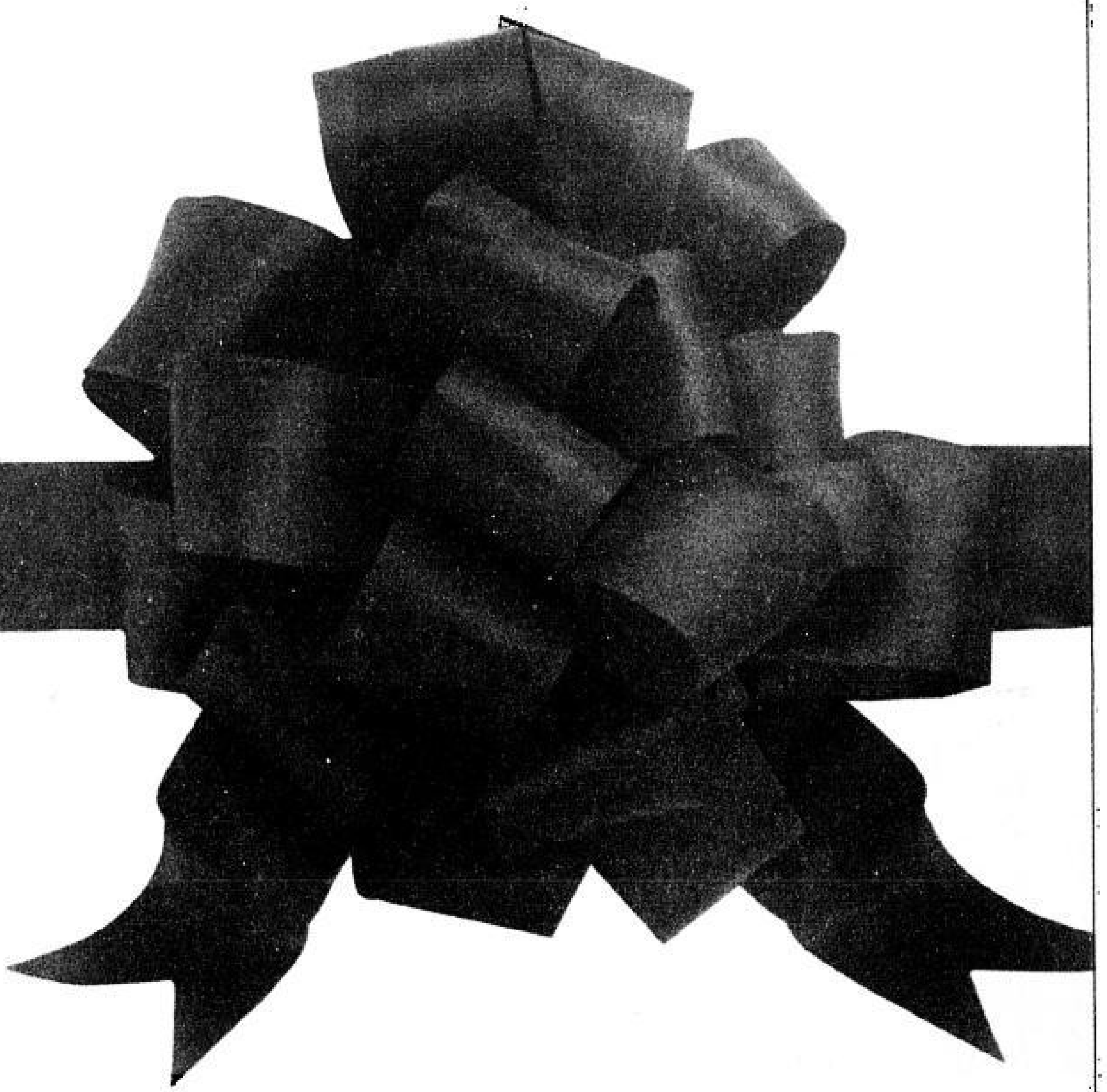
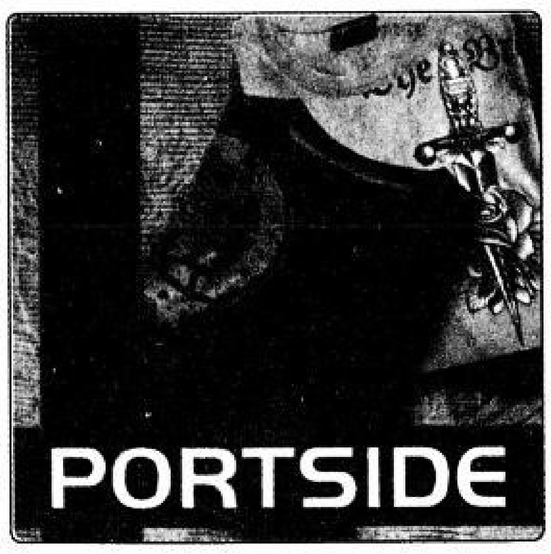
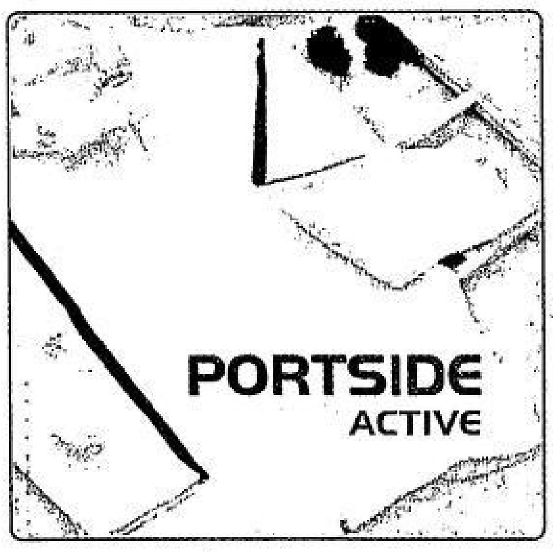


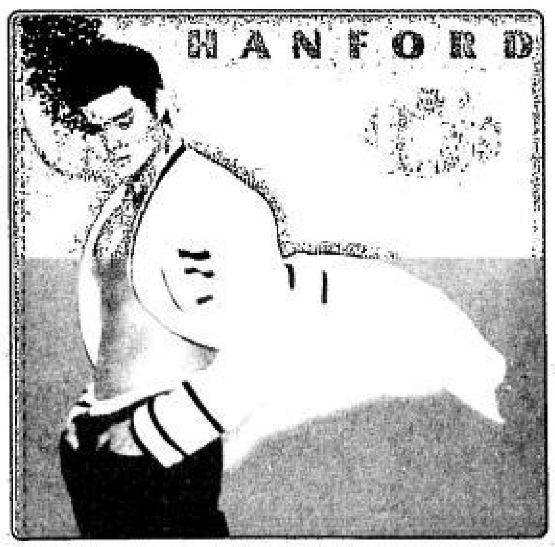
All the Gifts Yule Love

A gift for him this christmas




PORTSIDE
ACTIVE

Hanes
GOTTA have Hanes promo
see posters for details
Until February 15, 2007
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4264 Series of 2006



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Deliciously sheer lipgloss, that gives your lips the most brilliant shine.
GLOSSY LICIOUS
• Vitamin E enriched to smooth and condition your lips.
• Available in 6 luscious flavours.

POND'S
detox
cream
NEW POND'S WHITE BEAUTY DETOX

NEW! SHEENe
Lip Gloss
8
SPF 15
Beauty in One Touch

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Accessories
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Q&Q
HERITAGE
Bon-Art
HOME GALLERY
NIPPONWARE
William James
Fine Bone China
SUNNEX
Quality Always
Home Essentials
BY: CANOPY
TOWN & COUNTRY
Pg1
SHOWCASE
CARPET
All the Gifts Yule Love
MARGARET MUIR
Home Essentials
Barbie
Canadian
PlayStation
Snow White
LAMPARA
BOOKS
CHRISTMAS DECORS
Festival Cakes
Fruit Cake
Pringles
WANLY
BRATZ
DIAMONDZ
Sogo
YC YACHT CLUB
SO-EN.
H HAMER
Woman
Myra e
B+active
SKECHERS
LeDonne
Pitter-Pat
British Knight
HICKOK
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ILLUSTRAZIO
backpacks & school bags
advan
heartstrings
LEWIS & PEARL
arnaldo bassini
Zip
SKECHERS
Islander
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fashion series
Giant Catcher
GIBI
SA
Sweet Accents

The Season for GIFTS, FOOD & FUN

Greenhills Shopping Center:
Incubator of entrepreneurs

As the bustling landscape of Metropolitan Manila gradually changed over the past 40 or so years - a testament to its increasingly cosmopolitan lifestyle - the internationally-famous Greenhills Shopping Center has successfully maintained its standing as the country's number one value-shopping destination.

Home to thousands of stores selling unique wares ranging from jewelry to electronics and even antiques at bargain prices, the Ortigas-owned shopping center has withstood the test of time not so much by adapting to change, but by setting the trends for the rest to follow.

Indeed, despite sitting on but a fraction of the roughly 4 million square meters of retail space in Metro Manila, the 100,000-sqm shopping complex proudly boasts of selling about 90 percent of all the pearls and 40 percent of all the cell phones in the Philippine capital. Even in the highly competitive garments sector, it is a leader in sales relative to space.

This feat is due in large part to its retailers who, armed with an unusual amount of freedom granted them by the shopping center's management, have made Greenhills what it is today.

Greenhills' hugely popular and still unrivaled tiangges, for instance, were born because of the innate entrepreneurial spirit of its mostly Chinese tenants during the late 1970s. What began with store owners simply holding an informal sale to dispose of their old inventory has been established over the years to be one of the best sources of new, unique, and still cheap items in Metro Manila.

"Greenhills is not like other retail areas, which have a lot of rules and requirements. It's very friendly to start-ups," says Bonita Dabu of Bonita's, one of the pioneers of the Greenhills bangketa fair. In fact, a mere one month's worth of rent will allow anyone with a decent product to sell to start a business in Greenhills.

"In malls, you have to submit plans and designs, subject to their approval; in Greenhills, as long as you pay your dues, you can do almost anything," adds Chan Kok Bin, chair and CEO of Celine Marketing Corp, which opened its second store in Greenhills in 1982. "The no-rules part helped very much."

Business turned out to be good enough to make Dabu give up her vice principal position at the Immaculate Concepcion Academy to become a full-time businesswoman. Celine, on the other hand, is now one of the biggest names in the local footwear industry.

"We don't want to apply a lot of rules. As a general principle, as long as you have a good product and it's not illegal, you can sell in Greenhills," says Joey F. Santos, Greenhills' general manager. "Because of this philosophy, we have the tiangges that put and kept Greenhills on the map."

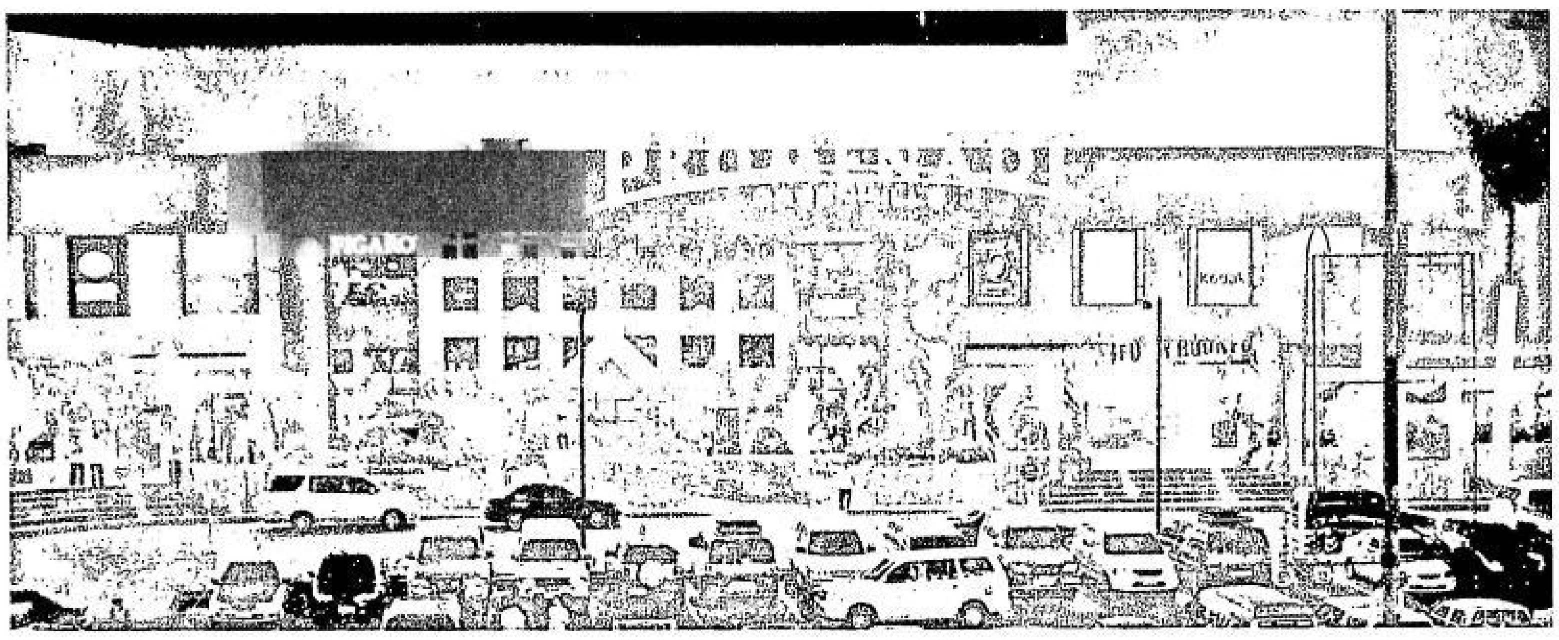
It is also this encouragement for entrepreneurs that has allowed Greenhills to constantly offer unique and innovative products that will only be seen in other shopping centers a few weeks or months later. As a result, most of the 100,000 people who flock to Greenhills on a regular day shop, and not so much loiter, making it even more an ideal venue to incubate start-ups. The impressive list of well-known brands that started shop in Greenhills includes Astrovision, Bayo, Folded & Hung, Gift Gate, Kamiseta, Odyssey, Toby's, and Wade.

The young couple behind meg*, a retail store for women's clothes, for example, entered the garments industry through a tiangge stall in Greenhills in 1998. Two years later, meg* was born and they began producing their own clothes. Today, with eight branches around Metro Manila, they are set to embark on an aggressive expansion and advertising campaign.

"Greenhills has a certain following. Consumers expect to find certain brands and products in malls, but in Greenhills, they get to find new items," explains John Lozano, meg*'s marketing manager.

Retailers add that Greenhills has a certain magic to it, attracting people like a magnet, and for businesses, money like a bank's vault. Salma Tago, one of the first Muslims to sell pearls in Greenhills, has the Zobels and even royalty like Queen Sophia for loyal clients.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find out that Greenhills has produced a number of self-made millionaires now owning their own mansions and driving around Metro Manila in luxury vehicles. More than anything, it is this achievement that they are most proud of.



Give a book on Christmas Day

STILL LOOKING FOR AN IDEAL Christmas gift to your friends and loved ones?

Look no further as New Day Publishers is offering a wide range of reading materials of up to 50-percent discount with its month-long book sale dubbed "Give A Book on Christmas Day".

The whole family can choose from hundreds of comic books, cookbooks, inspirational materials, religious, devotional, Philippine history, self-help, and school-oriented reading.

According to noted lady author Lenore Hershey "Do give books-religious or otherwise-for Christmas. They're never fattening, seldom sinful and permanently personal."

Yuppies can indulge in an abundance of insightful self-help books on practical topics such as John Byrne's "Survival Tips at Work and Survival Tips for Students", Liz Babbs' "The Thing About Calories, The Thing About Stress and The Thing About the Office".

For couples planning to tie the knot or who want to enhance their marital union, there is "365 Ways to Make the Most of Your Marriage" by Juliet Janvrin and Lucy Selleck.

One of New Day's most recent best-sellers is the handbook "Equipments, Pictorials & For A While: 284 Common Mistakes in English made by Pinoys" by Elizabeth Ong.

The book is a refresher for students, teachers, professionals and communicators who want to help the country regain supremacy in English proficiency.

Better still, gift yourself or your loved ones with an annual subscription. "The Upper Room" is a bimonthly Bible reading guide used by more than 10 million families worldwide.

It contains simple and practical guidelines for Christian living based on personal experiences of ordinary people inspired by God's faithfulness and providence.

Finally, get your dose of Rizaliana as the country marks the 110th anniversary of the martyrdom of the national hero with "Rizal and Heroic Traditions: A Sense of National Destiny" by Pablo S. Trillana III, a collection of essays on Rizal, history, governance, education and culture.

Sale is ongoing until Dec. 29 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. Call 928-8046 or 927-5982 or e-mail newdayorders@edsamail.com.ph for details.

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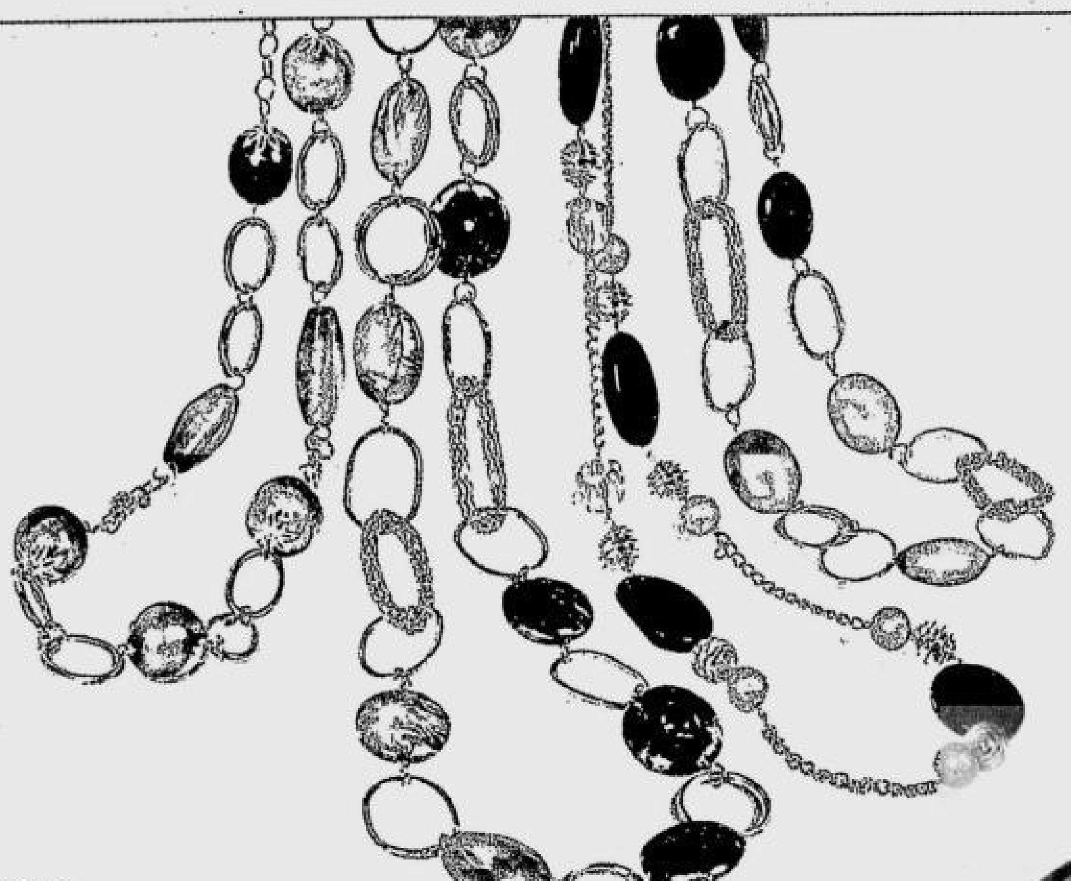
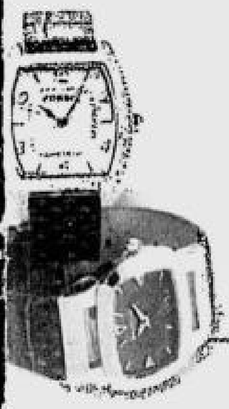
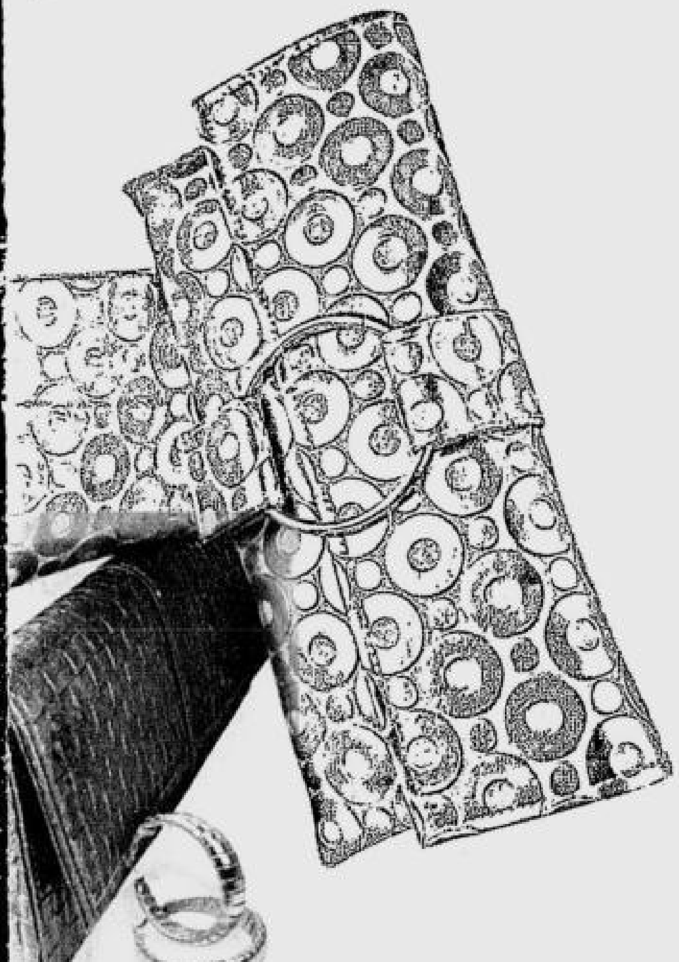


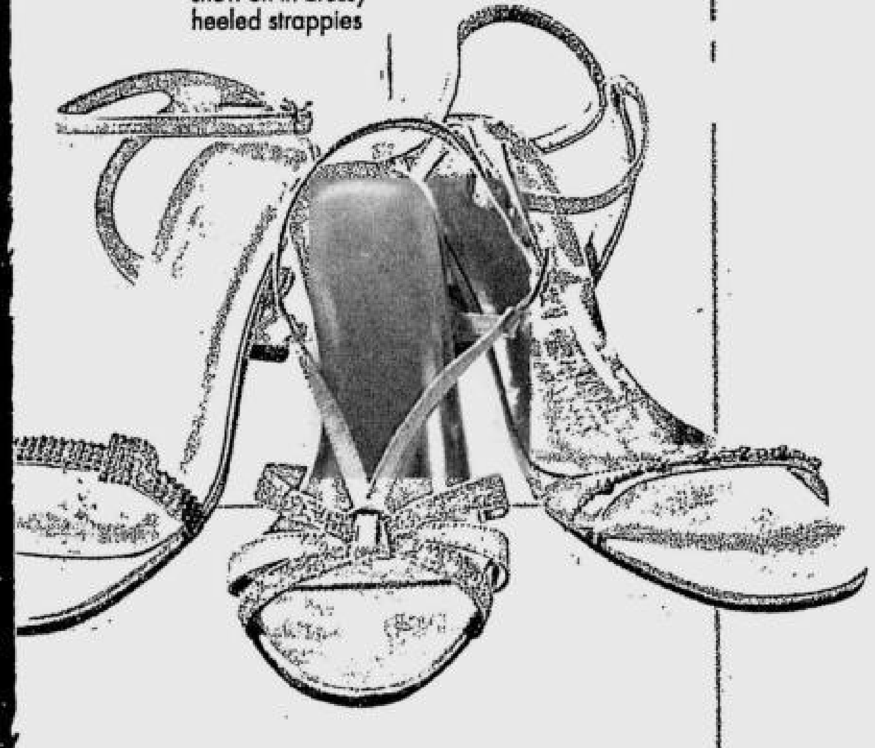
chain reaction
knockout necklaces in big and bright designs



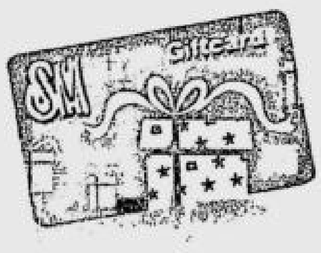
on the dot
go polka all the way with dotted top and matching accessories



time to sparkle
it's the season to show-off in dressy heeled strappies



red alert
strut the night in chic peep-toes paired with the right bag



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CHRISTMAS GIFTS ON LINE? YES. You don't need to go to the malls and find the perfect Christmas gifts for your families and friends. Instant access to a huge range of high quality IT products and services offered at discounted prices is now just a mouse click away, thanks to QubePC Technologies Marketing and its innovative brainchild, www.buyqube.com.

Formed in 2005, QubePC humbly started as a computer-retailing business. But as good feedback and word of their commendable service got out, demand increased. As such, the company expanded operations and began offering system integration solutions and Internet telephony, as well as branch out to the far-flung cities of the metro. Consequently, this strategic move has made them one of the leading computer distributors and system integrators presently.

To date, individuals, professionals, business offices, government entities, commercial establishments, and schools can avail of the company's goods and services in their four branches located at Gilmore Avenue, Shaw Boulevard, Alabang, Cebu and Davao. Otherwise, you can save yourself the trouble and log on to www.buyqube.com for a quick and hassle-free online purchase.

Choose from the extensive line of IT products included in their up-to-date XPC, Home or Office, Business, Home Theatre, and Gaming Packages. Or you can even customize your very own. Place and confirm your order, deposit the payment in the nearest bank and in a matter of hours, you will already receive your high quality goods. Now, that's customer satisfaction guaranteed!

Indeed, QubePC Technologies Marketing has kept up with the times and come up with convenient means so you won't be left behind. A wide range of techie products and services at discounted prices, an easy-to-do 10-step buying process and a fast and free doorstep delivery — things just can't get an better than that. They also encourage customer to buy on-line rather than going to a computer store and pay online banking than on store payments. For all your computer needs, simply visit www.buyqube.com, your virtual discount computer outlet.

For queries and more information, you can contact QubePC at (02) 410-QUBE (7823) or 0922-410-6849 to 50, or visit Qube, a PC in Gilmore, Quezon City.

Perfect Christmas gift from healthy options

WANT YOUR GIFT TO BE 100 PERCENT NATURAL, organic, additives-free and original? Then ask any of Healthy Options knowledgeable customer assistants (CAs) to help you "Create Your Own Gift Pack". Load up a large or small bag with items from its wide array of personal care products, or choose from the shelves of snacks, drinks and meals specially concocted for a specific health condition. Attractive Gift Cards in P200, P500 and P1,000 denominations are also available to allow the special person in your life the chance to pick out items that matter to his or her health. A minimum purchase of P2,000 gets you a free Art Calendar, a handsome desk accessory for the office or home featuring the fine art of Edgar Doctor as well as the stunning Chinese-influenced creations of Lizanne Uychaco.

Visit Healthy Options with branches located at level 1 of Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City; Rustan's Supermarket, Makati City; level 2 of Festival Supermall, Filinvest, Alabang; ground level of Ayala Center, Cebu City; lower ground floor of SM City, North Edsa; level 2 of SM City Manila; Greenbelt, Ayala Center, Makati City; at level 2 of SM Megamall B, Edsa, Mandaluyong City; SM Pampanga; and at the newly-opened stores at SM Sta. Rosa; SM Mall of Asia and SM Clark. For more information, visit their website at www.healthyoptions.com.ph.

In photo are red and white organic wines from France, Spain, Italy, Argentina, Chile and South Africa exclusively available at Healthy Options. The holiday gift box featuring a watercolor painting by commissioned artist Edgar Doctor is a special present to your loved one by "creating your own" gift pack with goodies from Healthy Options.

Preparing your home for the holidays

BEFORE DECKING THE HALLS WITH CHRISTmas lights and other holiday décor, you need to start with a clean house. Doing a major cleanup up just days before a holiday party can overwhelm even the most veteran of homemakers, so whether your place is a tiny condo or a family home, it's best to start organizing your place weeks before the holiday rush.

First, do a survey of the area. Check which rooms need the most cleaning and find out whether some things need fixing. Create a plan that includes cleanup dates, assignments for people who will help with the cleaning, and how you intend to decorate the place. Like any cleanup job, start from the top: do the uppermost floors first then work your way downstairs. Look into the most-used areas like bedrooms, living area, kitchen, and bathrooms. Scrutinize often-used-but-taken-for granted spaces like the stairs, hallways, closets, and cupboards. Also don't neglect spaces behind heavy furniture.

Unused and unnecessary things reduce household space so store away items that clutter your home. Prepare storage boxes and put labels on them so you can easily access the items once you need them again. Wash carpets and mats, check the garden for overgrown bushes and wayward weeds and fix broken items like pot handles, bathroom locks, and leaking faucets. Appraise your Christmas decorations. Take out those yuletide ornaments that suit your theme this year and give them a good dusting or washing to get them ready for displaying. Check for broken, termite-attacked, or missing items so you can replace them way before the holiday celebration starts.

When preparing your home for the yuletide season, use Original Pine-Sol Cleaner to remove stubborn stains and disinfect surfaces, and you will smell the distinctly Christmassy scent of fresh pine that lets you know you're getting the real clean. Pine-Sol Cleaner's dependable powers can be used in the kitchen to clean floors, counter, sinks, and stoves; in the bathroom to wash showers, tubs, tile, floors, and toilet bowls; to deodorize garbage cans, pet pens and diaper pails; and in the laundry for pre-treating grease spots and heavy soil on white and colorfast fabrics. The powerful scent of Pine-sol is also available in other variants – Lemon Fresh, Orange Energy, Sparkling Wave and Lavender Clean.

Keep in mind that your goal is to make your home clean and welcoming, not perfect, so don't stress yourself out. If you do your "homework" early and with some help from Pine-Sol Cleaner, you can look forward to an anxiety-reduced yuletide. Pine-Sol Cleaner is available in leading supermarkets nationwide.

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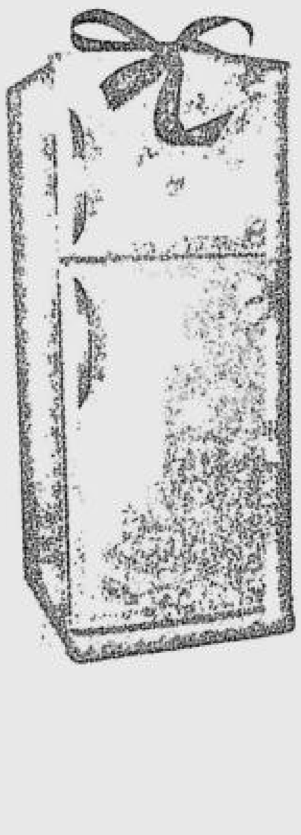
If you're looking for [illegible] wedding gift that will have the couple remember you warmly for life, get a GE, the ref that's built to last and last and last. It's America's most preferred appliance brand.



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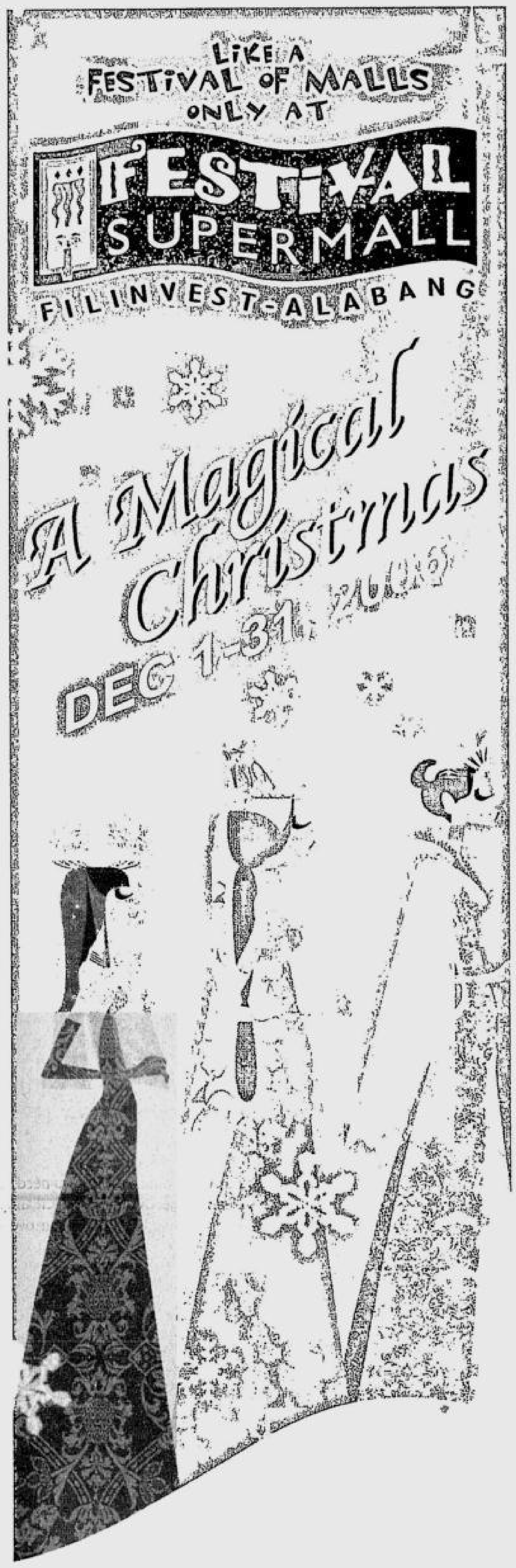

This week's events:

Leggiero Strings
Dec. 15, 18 and 21
Christmas shopping gets better with the sounds of Christmas in the background as a string ensemble plays a range of classical and contemporary hits.

Manila Philharmonic Orchestra with Ecole de Ballet Manille
Dec. 16
Delight in an evening of elegance and grace as the MPO and Ecole de Ballet Manille collaborate in showcasing classical ballet and popular Christmas and OPM songs.

SITTI: Live
Dec 17
Relax to a bossa nova Christmas as the Queen of Bossa charms the South in a 45-minute concert.

Next week's events:
A Christmas Concert by the Birthright Foundation • Dec 20
The Great Magicians Show • Dec. 22
Christmas Treats and Costume Contest • Dec. 23
The Lou Hilario Magic Show • Dec. 23 & 30

Watch out for other exciting events this month!

HOLIDAY MALL HOURS
Dec 1-22 (10am - 10pm) • Dec. 23 (10am - 12 midnight) • Dec. 24 & 31 (10am - 7pm) • Dec. 25 & Jan 1 (12nn - 10pm) • Dec. 26-30 (10am - 9pm)

FILINVEST

The Season for Gifts, Food & Fun

Holiday baskets at SM Supermarket

Holiday gift basket giving is a Yuletide tradition that brings on as much cheer today as it did in, as they say, Christmases past.

SM Supermarket's selection of gift baskets highlights contemporary tastes in the spirit of old-fashioned gift-giving. These baskets are packed with Noche Buena treats and holiday goodies, and come in delightful hampers and baskets, some even in wishing well and vine shapes.

There is a gift basket for everyone - for pizza and pasta lovers, for those who love healthy salads, for holiday snacks, and for Noche Buena celebrations. Ranging from P350 to P2,500, these baskets are affordable and packed with holiday fun.

Holiday gift baskets are available at all SM Supermarket branches at SM Makati, and at the SM Supermalls in North-Edsa, Sta. Mesa, Megamall, Southmall, Manila, Fairview, and San Lazaro in Metro Manila. In provincial areas, these are located at SM Supermalls in Pampanga, Baguio, Bacoor, Dasmarinas, Sta. Rosa, Batangas, Lipa, and Lucena in Luzon; and in Cebu, Iloilo, Davao, and Cagayan de Oro in the Vizmin area. These are also located at Savemore branches in Alabang, Marikina, Jaro, Mactan, and Elizabeth Mall.

For inquiries, visit SM Supermarket customer counters, or log on to www.smsupermarket.com.

Tara Wishing Bell Basket: (Top left) P2000. DAK Chopped Ham Pear Shaped 454g, Maxwell House Coffee-Instant 133g, Dona Elena Capers in Vinegar 100g, San Remo Pasta Special Penne 500g, Rauch Nativa Gingko Green Tea 1L, Dona Elena Extra Virgin Olive Oil 250 ml, Cadbury Dairy Milk Chocettes 45g, Imperial Variety Assorted Biscuits and Wafer 220g, Dona Elena Red Wine 750ml, Del Monte Fruit Cocktail 830g, Libby's Vienna Sausage 5 oz, Loacker Wafer-Napol 45g, Piknik Shoestring Hot 42g, and Hunts Tomato Sauce 15 oz.
Del Monte Merienda Cena Basket: (Top right) P500. Del Monte Elbow Macaroni 400g, Pineapple Tidbits 439g, Sweet Chili Sauce 325g, Fried Chicken Mix 125g, Coffee Syrup 350ml, Italian Spaghetti Sauce 250g, Recipe Sauce 200g, Fruit Express Classic 130g, Hot & Spicy Pizza Sauce 115g, Sweetened Pineapple Juice, Original Blend Ketchup 320g, and Magnolia Cheezee Filled Cheese 200g.
Tara Evelet Basket: (Left) P1500. Dona Elena Red Wine 750 ml, Libby's Vienna Sausage 5 oz, Fisher Cheese Balls 127g, Meji Chocolate Almond 70g, Del Monte Fruit Cocktail 830g, Lotte Choco Pie 168g, Tipco 100% Mixed Veg & Mixed Fruit Juice 1L, Spigadoro Pennine Rigate 500g, Libby's Corned Beef Black Brazil 12 oz, Campbells' Cream of Mushroom Soup 305g, and Dona Elena Extra Virgin Olive Oil 250 ml.

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Dasmariñas • Batangas • Delgado • San Lazaro • Sucat • Sta. Rosa • Clark • Mall of Asia • Lipa

Have a langhap-sarap Christmas with Jollibee specials

COMPANY PARTIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE AROUND Christmas, give employees great opportunities to bond and enjoy the season. For Pinoys, Christmas parties are also about sharing and enjoying good food. For such events, Jollibee offers the Jollibee Paskong Langhap-Sarap (JPLS) Party Packages for hassle-free yuletide celebrations.

For a truly langhap-sarap gathering, JPLS offers several packages that fit the office budget. At P104 per meal, enjoy the Christmas Super Meal A that contains one-piece Chickenjoy, one-piece BurgerSteak, rice, and a choice of 'Zert Pie. For P94, get the Christmas Super Meal B with one-piece Chickenjoy, two-piece Crispy Chicken Strips, rice, and a choice of 'Zert pie. Party organizers can also choose to mix and match the different Jollibee favorites such as the various Yumburger products, Jolly Hotdog, BurgerSteak, Chickenjoy, and 'Zert Pies for customized Christmas party packages affordably priced from P40 to P115.

For parties with kids in tow, Jollibee also has JPLS Kiddie Packs that each come with a cute surprise gift. For P66, kids get a Yumburger and juice. For P76, they can enjoy a one-piece BurgerSteak meal and juice, while the P92 package gets them one-piece ChickenJoy with rice and juice.

The package options come with free invitation cards, thank you cards, and party announcement posters. For events at special venues, Jollibee delivers food hot, fresh, and for free.

The JPLS experience can even include appearances by Santa Claus, or even Jollibee and friends, for a minimal fee.

Apart from the JPLS packages, Jollibee is offering the Christmas Chickenjoy Bucket Treat in a limited-edition bucket design. The crispylicious, juicylicious fried chicken come in three packages. Get six pieces of Chickenjoy, three cups of rice, three cups of mashed potatoes, three Rocky Road Sundaes, and three soft drinks for P475. There's also the P429 bucket with six pieces of Chickenjoy, three cups of rice, three servings of Jolly Spaghetti, and three soft drinks. The P399 package contains six pieces of Chickenjoy, three cups of rice, three 'Zert Pies, and three soft drinks.

With all these choices, Jollibee can make your Christmas celebration truly Pinoy, fuss-free and at friendly prices for every budget.

CDO offers ham for gift-giving

TOP MEAT PROCESSING FIRM CDO-Foodsphere Inc has provided the perfect answer to the dilemma of companies or individuals who are clueless on what items to give to their employees or friends this Christmas.

CDO senior marketing manager Jonathan Bendicion said there could be no more satisfying gift than a ham, which has been specially manufactured for the occasion.

"A ham is ideal for gift giving between business associates, employers and employees, friends, relatives, and neighbors," Bendicion said.

"CDO Holiday Whole-Meat Ham is something that people would be proud of giving and receiving at the same time."

Bendicion said the product is made of prime whole meat pork leg and has no extender. He said this ham is considered as the premium type because of its lean meat and savory taste.

He said that to sustain the good quality of CDO Holiday Whole-Meat Ham, the company makes sure that all materials, ingredients, and processes used are in accordance with internationally recognized standards.

Ham buyers can also win a brand new Toyota Fortuner and other exciting prizes in the "Give a CDO Holiday Whole-Meat Ham, Win a Fortune" promo recently launched by the food company.

"Over the years, CDO has perfected the art of meat processing, gathering a wealth of experience, resources and insights. The company takes pride as it posts consistent robust growth from year to year," Bendicion said.

The flagship Christmas ham product of the 31-year-old meat manufacturing company is offered at a price of P335 per kilo.

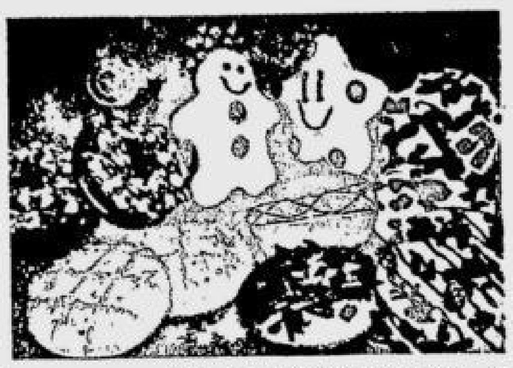
Yuletide combo treats at Ministop

IT GETS EVEN BETTER AT MINistop this Holiday season, as it treats its customers with great value meals in the "Christmas Combo Treat Promo". Ministop gives customers P10 to P12 savings in their featured meal or snack combo package as the Christmas rush begins to tax everyone's nerves and wallets.

As you do your last minute shopping from Dec. 18 to 24, have a flavorful meal that's light on the budget with Ministop's Toppers Shogayaki and Coke Light in Can Combo. Diners will find the P59 tag well worth the price for this Japanese pork fillet in ginger sauce rice meal that comes with a 330ml Coke Light. Christmas at Ministop becomes even more special with the Toppers Beef Gyudon and Nestea Green Iced Tea, to be offered from Dec. 25 to 31. Feast on this tasty Japanese beef rice bowl and finish it off with a Nestea Green Iced Tea drink-all these for just P58.

Start the New Year right with light and affordable snacks such as the Siopao Asado Regular and Absolute Distilled Water (350ml) Combo at only P21.75 from Jan. 1 to 7, 2007. Follow this up with a lip-smacking combo made up of Ministop's Belgian White Cone and Piattos Cheese family pack at P36.50 only from Jan. 8 to 14. With all these mouthwatering treats at great value for money, Ministop ensures that Christmas will indeed be merry and the new year happy.

Sweet Hot Loops treats



WHAT BETTER WAY to feel, spread, and taste the Yuletide cheer than with seven irresistible Hot Loops treats? Hot Loops offers a Christmas tray brimming with chocolate donuts perfect for the holidays. Among Hot Loops' holiday offerings is the Snow Boy, a take-off of the Christmas icon, Snow Man. This chocolate-filled variant has a cushiony base, richly frosted with white chocolate and adorned with melt-in-your-mouth choco drizzle and strawberry dots. The Star Loops donut is both a delight to the eyes and palate. Decorated with a smiley face, this donut has a velvety-smooth chocolate coating, which gives way to a burst of rich chocolate filling. Pair it with your favorite beverage for a real treat.

From the first bite alone, the Pasko de Bola is bound to satisfy those sweet cravings. The outside is glazed with red frost, green drizzle; and white dots. It all leads to a buttery chocolate center that will have everyone asking for seconds. It is the best of both worlds for chocolate and mocha lovers as Hot Loops brings them Choco-Mocha Overload. The variant's creamy mocha frosting is held together by spongy dough and dribbled with chocolate shavings. What more could you want?

Hot Loops' Yummy Yema is what taste and texture is all about. Topped with crunchy peanut bits and silky white chocolate frosting, Yummy Yema rewards you with a one-of-a-kind yema filing that melts in your mouth. Hot Loops Rockin' Rocky Road truly lives up to its name. Chocolate frost, crushed peanuts, marshmallows, and chocolate drizzle make this delight an experience not easily forgotten. The warm feeling that chocolate brings is found in Midnight Black Forest. Every bite of this chocolate-filled donut carries white frost, chocolate shavings and strawberry dot accents. Yes, every chocoholic will surely be pleased.

Whether as part of Christmas get-togethers or as gifts to family and friends, Hot Loops donuts brighten up the season with your loved ones. The holiday Hot Loops donuts are available at selected Robinsons Supermarkets and Ministop Convenience Stores, and other Hot Loops stores around the metro.

Healthy eating: Start them young with Walter Bread for Kids

IT IS OFTEN SAID THAT IF WE WANT TO INculcate certain values to a person, start doing it while he is still young. Teaching the value of healthy eating is not an exemption to this.

But while we want kids to eat healthy foods, a lot of barriers pose a challenge to this worthy goal. Among these are their access to junk foods, bombardment of TV advertisements, and the notion that healthy foods are not delicious.

The solution to this dilemma? Make them eat familiar foods that are delicious and healthy, like Walter Wheat Bread for Kids.

Walter Wheat Bread for Kids is deliciously packed with the necessary vitamins, minerals, trace elements and fiber. It has also been added with inulin, a natural soluble fiber, which is derived from chicory root.

While inulin is not well known as a supplement food, it is becoming a popular ingredient in many types of food because of its health benefits, notably in the digestive tract. Inulin is a prebiotic that promotes the growth of the "good bacteria" lactobacillus and bifidobacteria while decreasing the growth of harmful bacteria. This helps maintain normal bowel function, decrease constipation and promotes digestive regularity.

Recent research has shown that inulin has a beneficial effect in improving bone density and reducing the occurrence of osteoporosis because it can actually boost calcium absorption in the diet.

Aside from these, inulin may also aid in cancer prevention. Bifidobacteria digest inulin to short chain fatty acids like butyric acid which has been shown to have cancer-preventing properties in the large intestines.

Walter Bread for Kids also contains whole wheat which guarantees that your children will get the recommended amount of fiber intake. Fiber has been known to lessen the risk of heart disease, diabetes and prevent constipation.

Parents won't find a hard time making their kids eat Walter Wheat Bread for Kids because of its delectable taste and soft texture. So soft in fact that it can be mistaken for a white bread, only it is healthier than the white one.

Walter Bread for Kids is manufactured by Creative Bakers, makers of Walter Bread Sugar Free Wheat Pandesal, Sugar Free Wheat Bread and Double Fiber Wheat Bread. All products are available in all leading supermarkets nationwide.

CHRISTMAS TREATS AT GOLDILOCKS
Christmas is the time for thoughtfulness, and only one Filipino bakeshop has become synonymous with this idea. For the past four decades, Goldilocks products have become the first choice for holiday treats. This year, the country's number one bakeshop once again offers scrumptious delights that are ideal for yuletide appetites. These include traditional favorites like its mouthwatering sans rival, delicious cookies, and their own perfect versions of freshly baked apple pie and fruit cake. This year's bestsellers include the much talked about Cherry Jubilee Roll and the Goldilocks Chocolate Mousse. Best of all, these desserts are available at very affordable prices, so that family and friends can enjoy them again and again.

SNACK EXCHANGE

Lindt
Swiss Chocolates

Creamy on the inside, so chocolatey on the outside!

Lindt
CARAMEL
Swiss Milk Chocolate.Caramel Filling
Chocolat suisse au lait fourré de caramel
100 g NET
Lindt
PISTACHIO
Swiss Milk Chocolate
Nuts in Almond Filling
00 g NET

SM
We've got it all for you! DEPARTMENT STORE

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Dasmariñas • Batangas • Delgado • San Lazaro • Sucat • Sta. Rosa • Clark • Mall of Asia • Lipa

Have yourself a merry light Christmas with Hopia Mongo Lite

Hopia Mongo

THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON, DIABETIC patients are once again confronted with a big challenge, of controlling their appetites and avoiding sweet sumptuous food items, such as the ubiquitously present hopia.

Eng Bee Tin's main man Gerry Chua treats all health-buffs to an exciting surprise. The innovative maker of what many regard as world-class hopia and tikoy, has come out with Hopia Mongo Lite, which can be a perfect gift to the hopia-loving diabetic. "Feel no guilt when giving these lavish sweets to diabetic relatives and friends," says Chua. "In fact," he adds, "the Hopia Mongo Lite was meant for them."

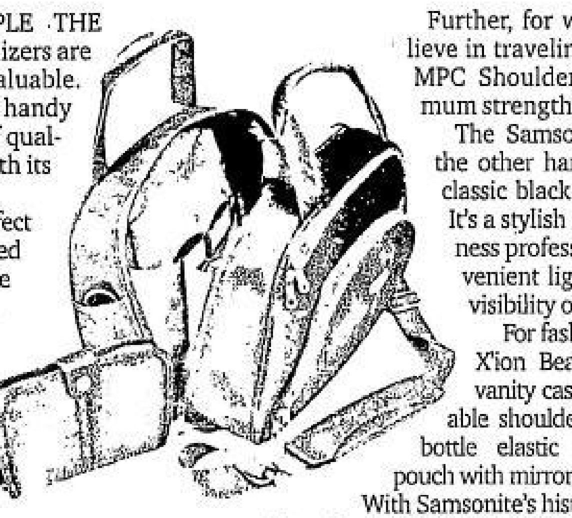
Gerry is the eldest son of Chua Chiu Hong, who established Eng Bee Tin in a simple stall in the heart of Ongpin, Manila in the '70s. The stall subsequently became well known for its traditional Chinese delicacies, such as hopia, tikoy and glutinous balls.

Chua explains that this special hopia has a low glycemic index; hence its sugar content is low and is suitable for diabetics and the figure-conscious hopia lover. With the carefully studied composition of the hopia lite, everyone can savor the classic taste of Filipinos' all-time favorite treat, filled with smooth mungo bean and sesame seeds. A die-hard hopia-lite eater describes it as "...an oozing blend of softness inside and crunchiness on the outside as compared to ordinary hopia."

According to Chua, Eng Bee Tin's various sweets and delicacies are its way of offering cheers to good food, and good life. "Our products are ingeniously and exquisitely prepared, it makes everyday life a celebration!" says Chua.

Eng Bee Tin enjoys the local reputation of making products par excellence, made only of the finest ingredients. There is goodness and freshness in every bite, meant to capture the heart. Eng Bee Tin products are locally available in various supermarkets, groceries, restaurants, office and school canteens. The company is also one of the biggest international exporters of Hopia, delivering to Asia, the Middle East, Europe and the United States.

It's in the Samsonite bag!



SINCE THE HOLIDAYS OFFER PEOPLE THE chance to travel, luggage, bags, and organizers are the perfect gifts: thoughtful and invaluable. What's more, these gift items are always handy and stylish. Samsonite, a leading brand of quality luggage, offers the perfect gift ideas with its wide array of travel companions.

The Sahora ICT Backpack, for one, is perfect for young professionals. It features a padded laptop compartment, cross straps and buckle closures that keep their laptop in place. Other great options for these kinds of travelers are the Samsonite Outliners Collection with its detachable laptop holder and the Outliners Sidewinder and Rafter with a laptop sleeve.

Career women, on the other hand, would do well to have any or all of the elegant and functional Hommage Lady Bag, Streamline MPC Shoulder Bag, Lady Business and X'ion Beauty Case. Hommage Lady Bag is a polyamide/polyester handbag with trimmings in high-quality nappa leather and an exterior fabric coated with stain repellent Teflon.

Further, for women who do not believe in traveling light, the Streamline MPC Shoulder Bag boasts of maximum strength and durability.

The Samsonite Lady Business, on the other hand, is an update of the classic black and brown laptop bag. It's a stylish solution for female business professionals, offering the convenient light-colored lining allows visibility of contents at a glance.

For fashion-forward women, the X'ion Beauty Case is the perfect vanity case: a smart sleeve, removable shoulder strap, outside pockets, bottle elastic holders, and make-up pouch with mirror are also available.

With Samsonite's history of luggage superiority, giving that gift you're sure will be used over and over again is made easier. Discover more gift selections by visiting these Samsonite shops: Samsonite The Podium and Samsonite Power Plant, Samsonite at Duty Free Philippines, The Travel Club outlets and major department stores nationwide.

A worry-free shopping spree with Avon

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, THE ULTIMATE Christmas shopping destination is Avon! And Avon goes big time with the biggest and thickest Christmas brochure ever-158 pages, magazine format in 12 x 16 size-to make holiday shopping the delightful experience that it should be. No traffic jams, no long lines, no troublesome search for a parking space, simply and only great shopping fun. Page after page is filled with exciting products and offers and customers can even enjoy up to 70 percent off on their favorite Avon products. Plus, customers can also enjoy wonderful shopping tips from Avon celebrity endorsers like Angel Locsin, Iza Calzado, and Bea Alonzo.

Get ready to unwrap your merriest Christmas with Avon. Get in touch with your Avon Lady and grab a copy of the Avon Christmas brochure. Don't have an Avon Lady yet? Call 864-AVON (2866) or e-mail helpdesk@avon.com. Avon is the world's leading direct seller of beauty and related products, with $6.8 billion in annual revenues. Avon markets to women around the world through 4.4 million independent sales representatives. Avon product lines include such recognizable brand names as Avon Color, Anew, Skin-So-Soft, Avon Solutions, Avon Naturals, Avon Fashions and Avon Wellness. Avon also markets an extensive line of fashion jewelry and apparel. Aside from providing women with quality beauty products and meaningful earning opportunities, Avon is also the largest corporate supporter of the breast cancer cause. Recently, Avon has announced reaching the new milestone of $350 million raised and awarded worldwide for access to care and finding a cure for breast cancer. More information about Avon and its products can be found at www.avoncompany.com.

GE Warehouse Sale becomes much-awaited yearend event

ALMOST SIX YEARS AGO, NO ONE EVER thought of how big this event would soon become. From a few appliance units and several participating appliance product lines, it has now become a mélange of world-wide leaders of trusted appliance brands.

Enjoy a month-long "GE Class B Warehouse Sale" this December. Have the best discounts among the display units and get to pick from a wide array of refrigerators, upright and chest type freezers, air conditioners, washing machines, water dispensers, microwave ovens, built-in hobs, built-in ovens, range hoods, gas and electric ranges, cordless and corded phones, and so on.

Also joining in are other participating brands like Ariston, Indesit, Fabriano, Daewoo, Uniden, Alcatel, Vicks, Canon, and Brother. Discounts start from 15 up to 40 percent off. So you get the best deal out of your bonuses and even save you a whole lot of worrying in this holiday season of frantic shopping.

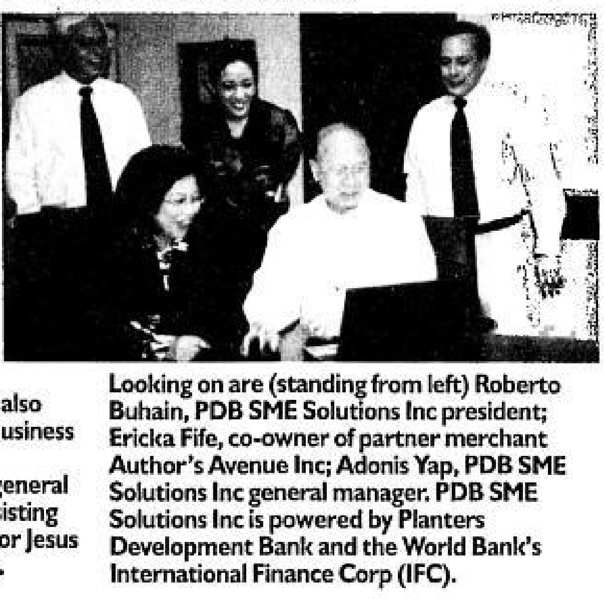
Stocks are limited and the sale will run until Dec. 29 only. So, drop by and catch GE's warehouse sale at CYA Industries' main office at 103 Mercedes Avenue, Barangay San Miguel, Pasig City. For inquiries, call the Shangri-La showroom at 631-8282 or 633-2906.

Hurry! Appliance Sale Up To 40% Off
GE Appliances

GE's Annual Warehouse Sale, with discounts of up to 40 percent, await customers coming from all over the metro.

ONE-STOP GIFT SERVICE MAKES SHOPPING A BREEZE

Christmas shopping is now made easy via www.Regaloservice.com, a full-service on-line gift shop where one can hit upon the finest and hard-to-find gifts for their loved ones. The website, which houses a wide selection of one-of-a-kind yet reasonable priced items, was made possible through Planters Development Bank (PDB) SME Solutions Inc's SME.com.ph, the country's leading online community for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Through this unique partnership, www.Regaloservice.com is also helping other entrepreneurs put their business on the web by making them partner merchants. Shown is Reggie Bundang, general manager of www.Regaloservice.com assisting Plantersbank chair and CEO Ambassador Jesus P. Tambunting make an online purchase.



Looking on are (standing from left) Roberto Buhain, PDB SME Solutions Inc president; Ericka Fife, co-owner of partner merchant Author's Avenue Inc; Adonis Yap, PDB SME Solutions Inc general manager. PDB SME Solutions Inc is powered by Planters Development Bank and the World Bank's International Finance Corp (IFC).

COFFEE PACKS: 'WARM UP THE SEASON'

'Chestnuts roasting on an open fire...' Ah, the moment that mellow tune by Nat King Cole is played then you know that Christmas is just around the corner. Then all sorts of Christmas ornaments line the streets as lights dazzle among the trees. And nothing can complement the warmth of the season than a comforting cup of freshly roasted coffee from Figaro. Batch-roasted to perfection, this coffee is a star of a gift! Get them fresh from any Figaro outlet. Check out www.figarocoffee.com to find out the branch nearest you.

Buy Now
Pay Next Year
LAST QUARTER FOR 0% Interest*
infinity
Foldable Motorized Treadmill
only ₱ 2,307.92/mo.
for 12 Months
Enjoy up to twice your installment credit limit**
*0% interest valid only if monthly bills are paid in full.
Subject to bank approval until December 31, 2006 only.
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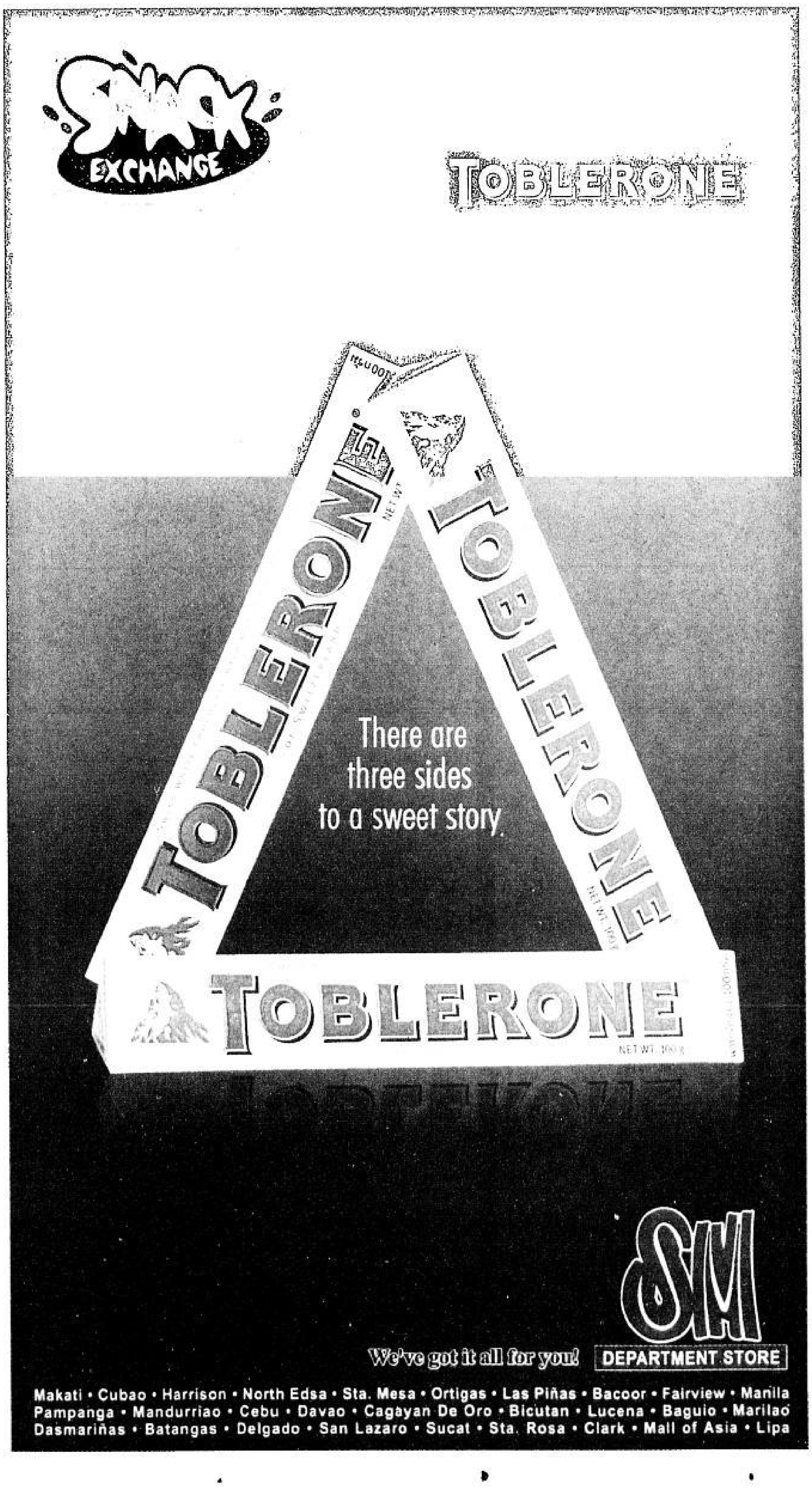
SNACK EXCHANGE
TOBLERONE
There are three sides to a sweet story.
SM
We've got it all for you! DEPARTMENT STORE
Makati • Cubao • Harrison • North Edsa • Sta. Mesa • Ortigas • Las Piñas • Bacoor • Fairview • Manila
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Dasmariñas • Batangas • Delgado • San Lazaro • Sucat • Sta. Rosa • Clark • Mall of Asia • Lipa

Unleash your natural beauty

TIRED OF ARTIFICIAL BEAUTY? ARE THE CHEMICALS in your beauty product wearing your face down? Are you in search of an all-natural approach to beauty?

Clara International has finally arrived in the Philippines with its synergistically formulated all-natural skin care products that is both safe and effective.

Clara unleashes nature's potent force by using the latest in beauty technology on all-natural ingredients. Whatever your skin type and age group, Clara has a wide range of skincare products that will complement you. Clara Herbal Skincare Products are 100-percent free from alcohol and animal by-products or derivatives.

With over 29 years of beauty expertise, Clara International has one of the biggest beauty chains all over the world. It has numerous beauty centers in the United States, Switzerland, Sweden, Hong Kong, China, Dubai, Malaysia, Singapore, India, Thailand, Brunei, Indonesia, Mauritius, and Myanmar.

Recognized for unmatched quality and high market acceptability, Clara was awarded with a Superbrand status in 2003 and 2004.

Clara Beauty Centers offer beauty treatments for pigmentation, pimples, acne, scars, keloid, eye milias, wrinkles, and dehydration. What separates Clara Beauty Treatment is that it involves no squeezing, no peeling, no bleaching, and it is non-surgical, hence it leaves no ugly marks, no redness, no uneven skin tones, no scars, and most of all, no side effects.

If you want to have that natural glow and exude refreshing beauty, visit Clara International at Unit-S Sunshine Boulevard Plaza, 1328 Quezon Avenue corner Scout Santiago, Quezon City, or call 374-6154, 374-0974, or 374-6085.

Christmas at The Podium

THE HOLIDAY MOOD AT THE PODIUM is both elegant and exuberant as it celebrates Christmas with fabulous pre-holiday sale finds and festive events.

The mall dazzles as giant gold Christmas balls hanging from evergreen garlands hang in its entrance canopy and atrium areas. Golden poinsettias and sparkling lights push the opulent envelope of style in this upscale mall.

If you're making a list, and checking great bargains twice, don't miss The Podium's three-day "Pre-Holiday Sale" on Dec. 15, 16 and 17. Enjoy up to 70 percent discount at the mall's participating tenants, including Speedo, Columbia Sportswear, Adidas, Arrow, Toy Kingdom, Baby & Co, Watsons, and Terry's Selection.

Also not to be missed is the great entertainment that highlights the music and the spirit of the season. Singer and songwriter Basil Valdez takes center-stage on Dec. 15, serenading shoppers with his undying classic love songs like "Ngayon at Kailanman". This takes place at 6 p.m. at the mall's lounge area, followed by exquisite seafood and wine party at the Chill Area at 7 p.m.

Completing this exciting weekend are performances by the Monserrat Singers and Sound on Dec. 16 at 6 p.m. at the lounge and Chill areas, respectively. On Dec. 17, Trumpets Workshop will bring its stagecraft to the mall's lounge area.

Young performers will then bring holiday cheers with a classic twist in a series of performances at The Podium. New generation members of Kundirana, the La Salle Greenhills music ministry group, whose past members have included Gary Valenciano and Ogie Alcasid, will thrill shoppers on Dec. 18 at 5 p.m. at the mall's lounge area.

Christmas classics will fill the mall with lounge area performances from Dec. 19 to 23 by the UST Wind and Brass Orchestra, the UP Singing Ambassadors, the Awit Filipinas Youth Orchestra, the YMDO Wind and Brass Orchestra, and the UP Symphonic Orchestra.

Kids can meet and greet the Cartoon Network's Power Puff Girls Blossom, Bubbles, and Buttercup at the lounge area on Dec. 22 at 2 p.m.

More holiday happenings and great reasons to visit The Podium: performances by A Capelle Manila on Dec. 27; Blue Sub Jazz Band on Dec. 28; Angelo Ortiz on Dec. 29, and Wet Fireworks on Dec. 30.

Durable, dependable gifts

FURNITURE SETS GIVE AN ELEGANT LOOK in any house. Yet, these are expensive and require high maintenance-you have to exert extra effort to make your furniture last for a longer period of time. For instance, regular application of polisher to wooden furniture home pieces is ideal to maintain its glossy look and will give protection from scratches.

Time and money are among the considerations in any investment you make. Considering that furniture sets are expensive and require high maintenance, it's quite impractical to invest your money on these items. Nowadays, it's important for consumers to be wiser and practical in any venture. People have to be more sensible in choosing the less-expensive yet durable and lovely home pieces like that of Orocan's products.

Orocan has revolutionized a way of organizing and designing your house. Its products are made of high-quality plastic materials which makes durability its primary attribute. Its products are well-designed to fit the aesthetic need of people from different walks of life.

If you invest in quality home pieces like Orocan, you're assured that you can manage your home in terms of its aesthetic requirement as you don't have to worry of putting them away from children's reach. Since the products are made of high-quality plastic materials, there's less probability that it would get scratches. Plus, it's also less hassle to keep your Orocan products clean as you can wash them with ordinary detergent.

With Orocan products, you can organize your house as well as add color and design to it. You can choose from the wide variety of chest and drawers by Orocan like the Caha de Oro Image Dresser with Drawers, the glossy Trio home organizer, the minimalist California chest drawer, the glossy and multi-colored Kidstuff, or the dynamic-colored Bambino. These drawers and chests are crafted to fit the organization need of any home.

Meanwhile, Orocan also provides other home pieces to keep other parts of your house organized, clean, and stylish. Like for example, you can keep your kitchen clean and organized while at the same time make it well-designed with Kitchen Queen. It can keep your dish wares, utensils, mugs, and even dry food safe.

Why invest in expensive and high-maintenance home pieces when there's Orocan that provides a wide range of products that could suit your needs? Affordable, durable, elegant, stylish, and convenient, these are the qualities you look for home pieces, the qualities that Orocan products possess.

All Orocan products are available in leading department stores nationwide.

DECEMBER
It's a merry month for banking.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 OPEN
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 OPEN
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 OPEN
24/31 OPEN	25	26 OPEN	27	28	29	30 OPEN

This Holiday Season, selected Metrobank branches are open to serve you every Saturday in December starting on the 9th, and on December 24, 26 and 31. We're also open on January 2, 2007. Please inquire at your branch of account.

METROBANK
You're in good hands.

Over 600 domestic and international branches, offices and subsidiaries
Head Office Metrobank Plaza, Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave., Makati City www.metrobank.com.ph
Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation Deposits insured up to P250 000 per depositor

A proud member of BancNet

One-stop Christmas shopping at Watsons

P99 each
with purchase at

CHRISTMAS-A TIME FOR family and friends-sharing and giving. Watsons, your personal store, is a perfect place to bring out your gift-giving spirit as it transforms into a one-stop gift center with its eye-popping Christmas merchandise coupled with the personal care items that you need this season.

Watsons customers need not go elsewhere and tire themselves with the hustle and bustle of the holiday rush because almost everything in your Christmas list can be found at the personal store. Watsons carries general merchandise, fragrances, plush toys, Winnie the Pooh collectibles, Christmas ornaments, confectionery, gift packs, and other personal care items that you need for the yuletide.

"Christmas is always big at Watsons." says Bobby Saneo, Watsons activation marketing manager. He adds, "People will truly have a merry little Christmas with tons of interesting items at our outlets." Watsons also gives customers a treat by giving away free cheeky Christmas bears or a free Christmas tree ornament for a minimum P500 inclusive of the "12 Best of Christmas" items.

Rush to your nearest Watsons store and free yourself of the hassle of Christmas shopping. With Watsons, a gift from the heart is a gift of love - there's no greater gift than that.

Save up this Christmas!

THIS SEASON OF GIVING SEEMS to be the season of spending to most people. Malls are jam-packed with people going through piles of items on sale. Bazaars seem to surface in almost every corner in the metropolis, each one claiming to have the best Christmas deal. Thanks to the year-end bonus, you're all set to conquer the holiday rush. From new clothes to gifts and Noche Buena, Filipinos indulge in the lavish culture of this tradition. With quite an overwhelming amount in your hand than the usual, it's easy to indulge in free-spending. Metrobank, the country's largest bank, offers ways to save up this holiday season even while you spend. Here are some measures to avoid this yuletide madness:

Allocate your expenses. Divide your money according to proportions that best fits you. Have a budget for gifts and personal items to buy for yourself.

Prioritize your needs. Gifts for family and friends, check! Must-have shoes, check! Bills and payments, uhm… Even if you included them in your wish list, Santa Claus won't spend a dime. Your responsibility doesn't stop when Christmas carols start. Finish your obligations first for a guilt-free shopping spree and start the year with a clean slate credit record.

Spend wisely. Mall sale and discounts are so enticing this time of the year. It's okay to treat yourself once in a while but that doesn't mean you'll jump at every item on sale. Chances are, you'll overspend without knowing it. Remember, they are on sale for a reason. You wouldn't want to spend your earnings on things you don't really need or on something that won't even last a year.

Personalize your gifts. If you have the time, personalize your gifts to make them more special. Get creative ideas from books, magazines, and the local craft store. With so much effort put into your gift, nobody would notice the price tag.

Be a smart shopper. It's Christmas, it's alright to feel generous. You can do so without blowing your budget. When buying gifts for your parents or your boss, it's alright to pool resources with your siblings or officemates.

Set aside savings. Most importantly, allocate a percentage of your money to save. Do this before you splurge and throw yourself into the "I-worked-so-hard-I-deserve-this" mentality. You worked so hard the past year that's why you have to be smarter on your spending.

Put your savings in an account. The Metrobank Fun Savers Club (FSC) is very appropriate because this is the time when kids get aguinaldos from their ninongs and ninangs. The FSC account is available for kids and teens up to 18 years old, for a minimum opening balance of only P500. There's also the FSC Gift Check which is ideal for any occasion. This saves you the trouble of looking for the perfect gift during the mad holiday rush. In addition, the recipient can opt not to spend and save it instead in a bank account.

For the serious savers, it's also the best time to save up for the future like education. For this reason, Metrobank offers the Easy Tuition Savings Plan wherein the depositor is assured of P100,000 total cash benefits that can be availed of starting on the 6th up to the 10th year, for a quarterly installment of only P3,333 over a period of 5 years.

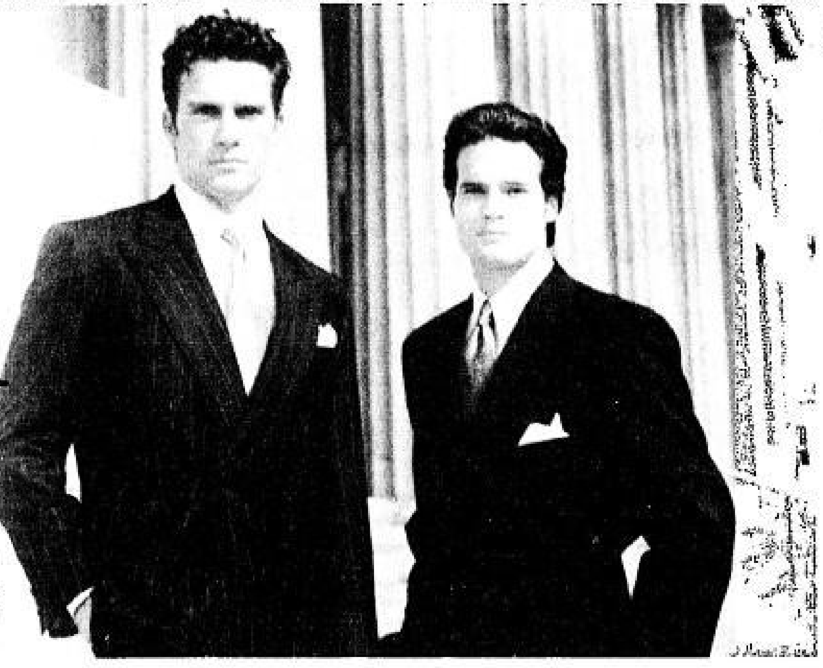
Want to know more? Log on to http://www.metrobank.com.ph/.

Softee unveils designer boxes

PRIDING ITSELF ON BEING AN INNOVATOR IN THE FIELD OF PERSONAL hygiene, Softee unveils a new line of facial tissue boxes that are fun, dynamic and unique. Among Softee's new designs are Avant-garde, Oriental, Floral and Anime. Top fashion designers Frederick Peralta and Hindy Weber Tantoco designed some of these boxes, making designer facial tissue boxes a very first in the industry. Whether you're a busy mom, a fashionable teen or just plain romantic, there will always be a Softee Facial Tissue for you. Softee is available at all leading department stores and supermarkets nationwide

FASHION FOR A CAUSE

In the true spirit of fashion and altruism



By Raquel Gomez

HIGH FASHION DONS A CAUSE-WORTHY attire. Hard to believe, isn't it?

But wearing a Van Heusen's Enrique Zobel Collection, you can be both fashionable and altruistic. Van Heusen, long recognized as an American classic offering premium choice of apparel for men, partnered with the Enrique Zobel Foundation to come out with a special limited edition of men's wearable which reflect the qualities of the late philanthropist, maverick, and corporate giant Enrique Zobel.

Over the past 10 years, the EZF has enriched the lives of the underprivileged by means of education, community building, and socio-economic developments in rural areas of the country with the help of its partners. Through its projects in Calatagan in Batangas, the foundation has reached out to the youth by providing them with education and hope for a brighter future. EZF aims to provide the Filipino people with skills and knowledge to uplift their lives and promote self sufficiency and productiveness in their respective communities.

Part of the proceeds from the sale of The Enrique Zobel Collection will go to the EZF to help fund the foundation's projects that cover not only education, but teacher training, infrastructure development, health and nutrition as well.

Zobel, for whom the foundation is named, was hailed as a visionary, a mogul, the taipan of all taipans, an accomplished pilot, the quintessential businessman, a philanthropist, feisty, controversial, a maverick, a restless Filipino, champion for social change and a deeply spiritual person. The composite painted the portrait of a man larger than life.

Zobel once said: "when you're dead, you don't give a damn. It's the end of the book. It's like turning off the lights—it's dark. What is important is how many people you can help while you're still alive." He died on May 17, 2004.

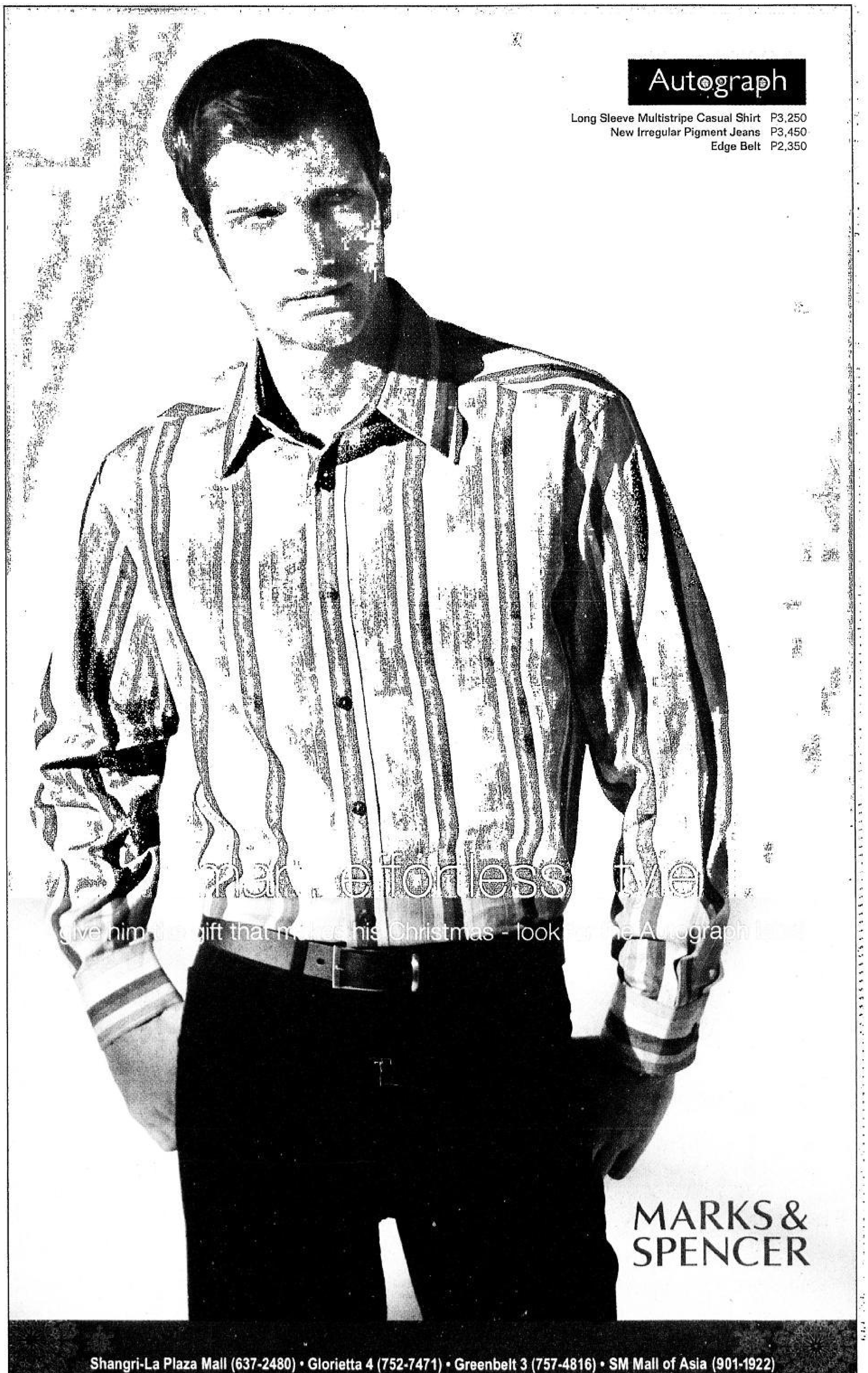
Zobel's wife, Dee Anne Hora Zobel, is keeping the lights on at the EZF as chair of the foundation. She personally has a hand in choosing some of the fabrics for the shirts, which are all of premium Italian cotton. "I did have fun in choosing some of the fabrics. My favorites are the blue and the blue print stripes," she said.

"Van Heusen gave me the opportunity to get involved in choosing the collection. Our partnership with Van Heusen is fashion for a cause. The

Enrique Zobel Collection is a special limited edition of beautiful shirts for men. Part of the proceeds from the sale of this collection will go to the EZF. Your purchase of this collection will help support a noble cause."

As a product bearing a Van Heusen label, The Enrique Zobel Collection features impeccable tailoring, luxurious 100-percent Italian cotton and fine craftsmanship as its hallmark of excellence. For men with discriminating tastes in fashion and the movers who stride in corridors of corporate success, no other label is better suited to reflect confidence and refinement than Van Heusen.

The Van Heusen Enrique Zobel Collection is available at Van Heusen stores in Shangrila, Greenhills, Megamall, Robinsons Manila, Gateway Men's World, Glorietta 3, SM Cebu, SM Mall of Asia, SM North Edsa-The Block, Rustans Tower and Rustans Alabang Town Center.



Autograph
Long Sleeve Multistripe Casual Shirt P3,250
New Irregular Pigment Jeans P3,450
Edge Belt P2,350

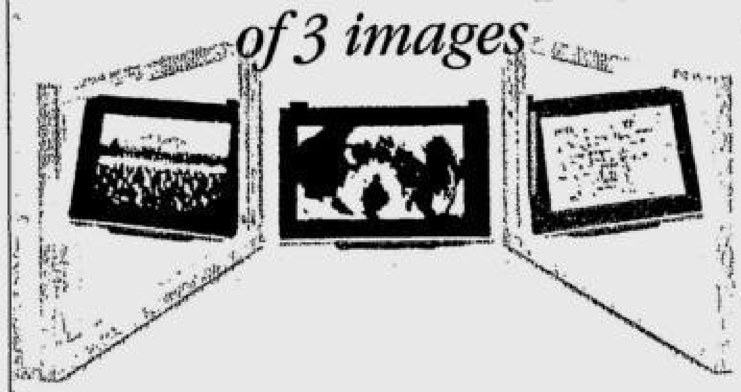
effortless style
give him the gift that makes his Christmas - look for the Autograph label

MARKS & SPENCER

Shangri-La Plaza Mall (637-2480) • Glorietta 4 (752-7471) • Greenbelt 3 (757-4816) • SM Mall of Asia (901-1922)
Alabang Town Center (842-4558) • SM Megamall A (632-0171) • Power Plant Mall (898-0946-48)

Rustan Marketing Specialists, Inc. (RMSI) is the official franchisee of Marks & Spencer in the Philippines

Sharp Triple Directional Viewing LCD offers simultaneous display of 3 images



SHARP CORP AND SHARP Laboratories of Europe Ltd (SLE) have developed the Triple Directional Viewing LCD, a display that controls the viewing angle so that the display can show different images from the left, right, and center simultaneously.

Sharp's history is one of constantly improving on LCD performance factors like contrast and viewing angle. Its innovative LCD technology has opened up new digital consumer electronics markets for products like TVs, notebook PCs, and mobile phones. Last year, the company developed two world-first products for controlled viewing angle: the two-way viewing-angle LCD and the switchable viewing-angle LCD. Already in use in products like car navigation systems and mobile phones, these displays have allowed Sharp to once again create new demand and contribute to the creation of new lifestyles.

Sharp Triple Directional Viewing LCD takes this controlled viewing-angle technology a step further. Using a proprietary parallax barrier on a standard TFT LCD, the screen splits light in three directions-left, right, and center-and displays three separate images on the same screen at the same time.

Imagine; for example, people taking a drive in a van. The driver uses a car navigation system screen, the person in the passenger seat checks out tourist sites and restaurants, and the person in the back seat enjoys a movie on DVD, all in full-screen view. It's truly one LCD that plays three roles at once.

Sharp Triple Directional Viewing LCD is also ideal for multipurpose signs in public: it could display three different ads for stores or restaurants, each aimed at people walking in a certain direction.

As the world's leading LCD manufacturer, Sharp is meeting consumer needs by expanding its lineup and developing new and convenient uses for controlled viewing-angle LCDs.

Keeping the Christmas spirit in the heart of every family

WITH MULTITUDES OF FESTIVE EVENTS and gatherings sprouting throughout the metro in celebration of the Christmas season, you can't help but get baffled as to what to go to and where.

This holiday season, Rockwell's Power Plant Mall makes sure you won't have to look anyplace else as you'll find all the reasons to be joyous this Christmas only at Rockwell.

On Dec. 16 and 23, be moved by the splendid music of Arthur Manuntag as he brings back the sound of old-fashioned romance. Close your eyes and dream along as this charming balladeer smoothly serenades you with all-time favorite classics.

Sway to the rhythm of Christmas medleys as ballerinas gracefully move and fill the Plaza Strip with dance on Dec. 17.

Sing with the angels above as the powerful voices of choirs dominate the halls of the mall every weekend until Dec. 24.

Be amazed by the soaring Christmas tree, all made up of maple leaves and fully adorned with bright amber-colored lights. And get enthralled by the abundance of poinsettias and wreaths inside the mall.

Give your kids a Christmas experience to cherish forever at the "Santa's Wishing Station", where they can send Santa their Christmas Wish List...and receive his reply!

Or, have them meet and greet Santa himself at the Gingerbread House located at the South Court of the mall on Saturdays and Sundays from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

And reward yourselves with a much-deserved holiday treat with the mall's Christmas Wish List where you get a chance to bring home delightful holiday treats from notable stores like Crabtree & Evelyn, Sapato Manila and Aranaz.

Truly, Rockwell never fails to add a special dose of magic to the holiday season. In bringing families together to celebrate traditions, Rockwell's Power Plant Mall offers experiences to be treasured in the heart of every family.

Robby Rabbit launches 'Negosyo Agad!'

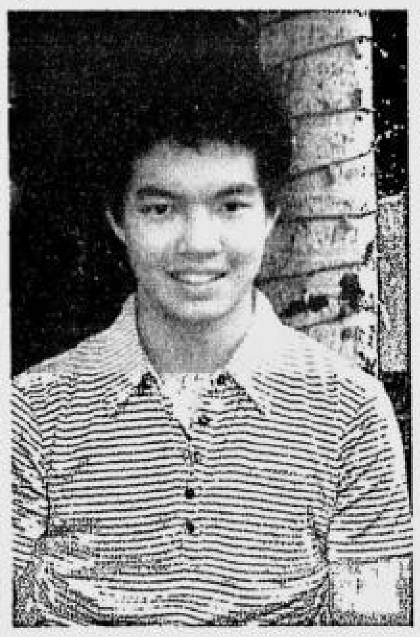
CHARACTERS UNLIMITED, MAKERS OF Robby Rabbit, supports entrepreneurship in the Philippines by launching "Negosyo Agad: Handog ni Robby Rabbit" under the leadership of Characters Unlimited president Steven Ching.

Steven Ching enthusiastically advocates entrepreneurship in the community, especially in the micro level such as those in barangays. In accordance with the Barangay Micro Business Law, which encourages constituents to start conceptualizing new products or services, Steven Ching has come up with a way to make good use of the Filipino entrepreneurial talent. With "Negosyo Agad", he wants to do his part in providing livelihood opportunities for people who normally don't have capital for putting up big businesses. Robby Rabbit is his way of instilling the entrepreneurial spirit amongst students and aspiring entrepreneurs to be successful in their own businesses.

"Negosyo Agad" is a system that allows participants to earn as much as 33 percent off their capital by reselling fast-moving Robby Rabbit items in the comfort of their own homes, and according to their own time schedules. With only a minimum capital of P3,000, "Negosyo Agad" provides instant business for people who want to earn money this Christmas. Whether you are a stay-at-home mom, a student, or a sari-sari storeowner, Robby Rabbit allows its fellow Filipinos a great opportunity for business. Robby Rabbit was born in the Philippines and has been a mainstay in kids' and teenagers' lives for decades by providing quality apparel, bags and accessories at reasonable prices.

Successful businesses contribute to our country's economic growth and with "Negosyo Agad", Robby Rabbit is doing its part in helping the country achieve that goal while helping fellow Filipinos in the grassroots level of commerce.

It's Ducks for everyone this Christmas



CHRISTMAS IS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY - enough reason for some to sing "Falalalalala!" For students like Anthony Concepcion Young and Adrian Dimacali of La Salle and Ateneo, respectively, it's the merry month, and they are swooping over shopping malls to find the perfect Christmas ideas for their families and friends.

Christmas gift ideas need not be monotonous or repetitive. Anthony says, "Some stuff I will give away is Ducks Unlimited shirts, especially for my Dad and Mom. It's engineered to keep you cool."

Yes, Ducks Unlimited, with its different styles and colors, has shirts that wick the moisture away from the body. To date, the Ducks Unlimited Christmas sale is ongoing, with discounts from 10 to 50 percent on selected items. Go to your nearest Ducks Unlimited shops now!

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CCAP unveils future of credit card industry

In the Credit Card Industry

CCAP cxecutive committee (from left) BPI's Ginbee Go, Citibank's Jenny Lacerna, Banco de Oro's Rolly Tanchanco, East West Bank's Alex Ilagan, Bankard's Beth Legarda and American Express' Ian Fish.

CREDIT CARDS, ALSO REFERRED TO AS PLASTIC money, have been a catalyst to upsurge the buying power of cardholders locally and internationally through the aid of technological solutions used by credit card issuers. This year, in celebration of its 25th anniversary, the Credit Card Association of the Philippines (CCAP) unveiled the latest technologies to be employed by the industry as a continuing effort to bring greater ease in credit card use.

Dubbed "Trends and Opportunities for Credit Card Industries", the first ever conference led by CCAP delivered talks from speakers belonging to industry players and outsourced service providers on technological advancements to be implemented to improve further the already thriving quality of credit services.

According to CCAP president Alex Ilagan, the conference was conceived to be the venue for industry players to share news on the latest developments and technology in credit cards. The affair drew more than over 250 participants, mostly from CCAP's member banks as well as officers from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

MasterCard's Craig Vosburg kicked off the event with a talk dubbed "Global Trends in Delivering Cards Business Profit Growth".

Visa country manager James Dixon's topic was "Electronic payments driving economic growth". Combining technology and expertise, Visa provides secure electronic payments that bring macro and micro-economic benefits to both developed and emerging economies throughout the world.

Revolutionary tools for business such as open platform's operational and cost efficiency was tackled by Chin Min Fei, business development director of Sunguard System Access, which provides solutions that help banks present a broad range of banking products and services that are more robust and scalable and allow banks to aggressively promote services.

Other important points discussed include emerging trends in payment solutions through RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) that allows contact-less payments as well as new standards like EMV (Europay, MasterCard, Visa) chip technology and PCI (Peripheral Component Interconnect), delivered by Hypercom Singapore's general manager Robert Choo, for Equicom.

Telecommunications companies PLDT and Innove, which functions in enabling the data transmittals for the banking industry, were also on hand to discuss various Information and Communications Technology (ICT) solutions to make possible the acceptance and processing of electronic payments faster, easier and more secure.

Advanced payment technologies and the benefits of Internet Protocol (IP) infrastructure for business acquisition and the introduction of a new paradigm in payment device with multimedia capabilities that meet PCI PED security was the high point of technical services director Oscar Alcuaz' discourse. VeriFone's Mx870 is a capable device for PIN pad, terminal, cashless ATM and retail banking. Its 65K color display and high-quality digital audio allows on-site broadcast advertising and corporate messaging right out the check-out lane.

One of the highlights of the recently held event was leading smart cards provider Oberthur Card Systems announcement of the first fully EMV certified personalization center in the Philippines in the second quarter of the year 2007. Oberthur's director for banking and transportation, Mark Garvie, explored issues and options regarding EMV personalization models with a special focus on outsourcing.

"Trends and Opportunities for Credit Card Industries", the silver anniversary conference by the Credit Card Association of the Philippines, was held at the Edsa Shangri-la Plaza Oct. 20 and was graced by no less than top executives of CCAP's 15 member banks namely AIG Credit Cards, American Express, Bankard, Banco de Oro, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Citibank, Equitable Card Network, East West Bank, Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp, Metrobank Card Corp, One Card International, Philippine National Bank, SB Cards Corp, Standard Chartered Bank, and Union Bank of the Philippines.

Starmaker fireworks safety tips for the holidays

STARMAKER, THE COUNTRY'S LEADING PYrotechnics company, shares some helpful fireworks safety tips for the Yuletide revelries. The company, known for its international fireworks standards, produces the safest fireworks in the market. It is responsible for the spectacular pyromusical shows at the SM Mall of Asia Fridays and Saturdays. Starmaker was given the Award of Excellence as Manufacturer of the Year by the Philippine National Police, and the safety award by the PNP Civil Security Group headed by Police Chief Superintendent Leonardo Dionesio, Director, Civil Security Group.

For this holiday season, Starmaker offers the following safety tips:

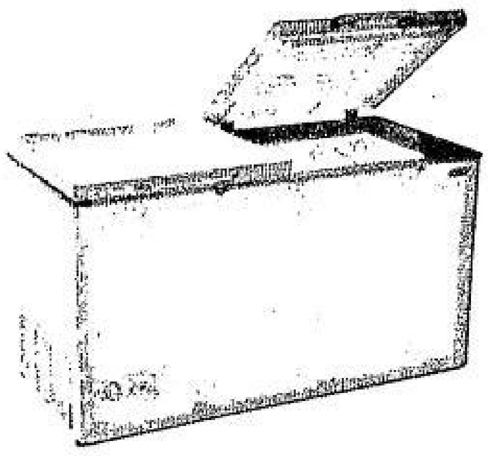
- Always light the fireworks outside your homes unless the label specified that it is safe for indoor use.
- Always have an adult supervision when children light fireworks.
- Do not use fireworks when under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Use fireworks in wide open areas only.
- Always light fireworks away from persons and properties.
- Read labels carefully for instructions on proper handling and use before lighting fireworks.
- Light fireworks on hard, flat ground and put heavy objects around it for added stability and safety.
- Keep body parts away from lighted fireworks.
- Do not come close to a lighted firework.

Starmaker's pyro musical shows have been attracting crowds. Catch the spectacular display of lights and music on the following dates and malls: SM City Clark (Dec. 16), SM City Lipa (Dec. 16 and 30), SM City Dasmarinas (Dec. 17, 25 and 30), SM City Pampanga (Dec. 23), SM City Marilao (Dec. 23) and SM Supercenter Molino (Dec. 30). The company also has regular shows at the SM Mall of Asia every Friday and Saturday, at the Alabang Town Center during Sundays and at Robinsons Malls.

Starmaker exports fireworks to its Asian neighbors, Europe, Middle East and Australia. It also participated in the 13th Macau International Fireworks Festival in Macau China.

Celebrate life with Fujidenzo

FUJIDENZO HOME AND COMMERCIAL APPLIances combines style and performance to meet the high demands of fast-paced living. Taking into account the high cost of living and non-stop surge of prices of commodities, Fujidenzo has developed appliances designed to give quality performance at the most consumer-friendly prices. Fujidenzo carries a wide range of appliances to choose from: Single and Twin Tub Washers for all your laundry needs, Microwave Ovens for those quick meals, and Chest and Upright Freezers for your cooling and food storage needs. For more information on Fujidenzo Appliances, call 712-0535 or e-mail sales@exatech.com.ph.



'Latin Nights Live' at Casa Armas!

ENJOY LIVE LATIN DANCE MUSIC EVERY SATURDAY NIGHT FROM 10 P.M. TO 2 A.M. ONGOING until Dec. 23 at Casa Armas Tapas Bar Y Restaurante located at Level 3 of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati City. Featured band performers are well-known Latin Bands "Onda Latina" and "Clave". Complement this entertainment pleasure with authentic and delectable Spanish Tapas which Casa Armas is known for and special cocktail drinks like Sangria. This event is sponsored by Remy Martin and Absolute Vodka. For reservations and inquiries, call Casa Armas at 757-4996 or 757-4961.

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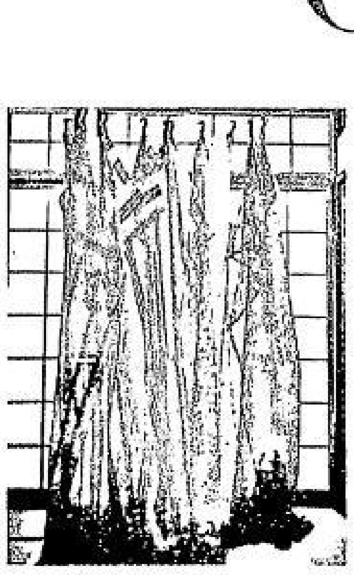
Decorating with Curtains



ARQ's newest collection available at Our Home

The origin of the use of curtains date as far back as the ancient Jews and Egyptians. At this time curtains were used primarily for privacy. They were plain fabrics draped generally on window and door openings. Whatever it may have been used for, curtains were just made of simple, fine fabric. Over the years, though, people probably realized there's more to curtains than what they actually are. Curtains were no longer used merely as draperies but as symbols of affluence and good taste.

Today curtains have gone a long way. Its application is no longer limited to windows and doors. There is now a wide selection of fabric to choose from. Even curtain rods, finials and tiebacks come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. People are now more open to a wide variety of styles that come with an equally extensive assortment of embellishments and accessories.

So to fully appreciate the curtain we're buying, let's familiarize ourselves with how it evolved through the years.

ARQ's curtains in various colors and textures

Let's start with purpose.

It used to be that people were just set on the idea that curtain fabrics are solely for window and door openings. Through the years, people discovered that there are no limitations to its application. Today one can see curtain fabric as wall accents, room or space dividers, sometimes even furniture drape.

Now style has become as varied as purpose. Actually, it's even more diverse. Pinch pleats, Euro pleats, tab top, cafe style, you name it. One can only be limited by one's imagination. Embellishment and layering are the spice of curtain decoration. You can go as simple or as ornate as you want. These days, one is not surprised to see curtain jewelry, grommets, beaded trims and other accessories sewn into the fabric. It's just a matter of how creative one can afford to be.

Decorative curtain rods, finials and tiebacks can add the finishing touches to your window dressing because they come in a wide variety of styles as well. Not only are they made of wood or iron but it is now possible to use other materials such as wires, cables, hooks and pins. Sometimes designers even go as adventurous as using tree branches or other unique resources.

What makes having curtains more delightful nowadays is that you can now buy them off the shelf. Curtains can be bought pre-cut and finished to standard sizes. Well, one can still have made to order pieces but since there's already a wide selection readily available in most home stores today, acquiring curtains have become as easy as buying your household groceries.

All in all, curtains are now more fun to do. Mixing and matching them and their accessories create a design that reflects our moods and personalities. And since application and treatment is so flexible, curtains can now make a design statement of its own.

Decorating with curtains has truly evolved.

ARQ's wide variety of wooden and metal rods and finials

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Exquisite Christmas ham from Century Park Hotel

ENJOY THE JUICY AND RICH SLAB of honey glazed ham from Deli Snack on your holiday table, an award-winning recipe from butcher master Teddy Barro, a proud Silver Medal Awardee for Cold Meat Platter category in Chef's Parade. Succulent, tender and tangy, it has become a favorite for so many years by different patrons. Using secret spices, fire-glazing the ham with a special recipe and other imported spices, smothered with a caramelized honey. Perfect for sandwiches and as appetizer, each slice is an assurance of freshness and flavorfulness.

For inquiries and reservations please call 528-8888 or email information@centurypark.com.ph

The Century Park Hotel is owned and managed by Maranaw Hotels and Resort Corporation.

Star Wars and great gift ideas at 'Collectibles Christmas Fair 2006'

GIVEN ITS DEEP UNDERSTANDING of the consumer's mindset - and the capacity of stalls and shops to provide buyers not only with quality products but value for money as well - a Christmas fair gathers together under one roof a treasure trove of goodies for serious shoppers, bargain hunters, and collectors in one big venue.

Co-organized by the Collectibles Unlimited, the Collectibles Christmas Fair 2006 which runs on Dec. 22 and 23 features a myriad of collectible and memorabilia items that promise to give consumers a one-of-a-kind shopping experience.

Apart from the many gift choices and ideas, toy hobbyists and collectors as well as kids can savor a unique experience that the Collectibles Christmas Fair 2006 prepared. See for yourself what treasures you can dig up and take home with collectible items such as anime, comics, toys, cards, games, dolls, action figures, cars, collectible and memorabilia items. Lined-up are special Christmas activities that the family can look forward to from Toys and Comics Collectibles Auctions from 12 noon to 5 p.m. on Dec. 22-23 and Anime Cosplay on Dec. 23 at 6 p.m. to Star Wars Meet & Greet Photo Opportunity, where everyone will have the chance to have photos taken with different Star Wars characters for free!

More importantly, the Collectible Christmas Fair 2006 forms part of the Christmas Gifts Expo 2006 (which runs on Dec. 20 to 30, except Dec. 25) as a first-rate shopping haven and destination for excellent buys. With its combination of the Collectibles Christmas Fair 2006 within the Expo, it offers great gift choices that shoppers can choose from for each member of the family.

The Collectibles Christmas Fair 2006 will take place at SM Megatrade Hall 3. For more information, call SM Megatrade Office at 633-1697 or 634-7617.

Your coins can help typhoon Reming victims

DUE TO THE DESTRUCTION CAUSED BY typhoon Reming, the Jollibee Foundation is helping our countrymen rebuild their lives by deploying coin banks at all Jollibee Foods Corporation stores where customers can make their monetary donations. All money donated through the coin banks will be used for relief and rehabilitation efforts. You may give your monetary donations for the Typhoon Reming victims through the Jollibee Foundation coin banks at all Jollibee, Chowking, Greenwich, Delifrance, and Red Ribbon stores.

The Wise Gift for Christmas

THIS YULETIDE SEASON, GIFT-GIVING IS A tradition that never fails to add sparkle to the light of Christmas. And for the perfect gift in celebration of His birth, there is a Parker.

As the magi of the faraway lands traversed the paths to His birthplace, so does the Parker ink flow from the mind to the tangible. Parker's elegant craftsmanship and superb technology create a stir of wonderful feelings that radiate from the heart to the hand. With every stroke of the pen, ideas are set free... with each word and sentence, memories are forever inscribed. Lasting impressions are formed through the pen - impressions that last the whole year through, and even beyond.

Let those who occupy a room in your heart feel your sincerest gratitude. Give them the gift that best reflects the great memories shared. Make them feel really special.

In celebration of His birth, wise men know it: Parker shines as brightly as that extraordinary star.

Great meat choices for the holidays

THE SECRET TO A GREAT FEAST LIES IN THE planning. With the holiday season barely three months away now is the time to make a list of the parties you will be hosting and the groups of people you will be entertaining. It would also be more practical to have thematic menu plans since this would make shopping for supplies and cooking easier.

Monterey presents the following suggestions for the busy homemaker.

Check out supermarket and grocery fliers and advertisements for non-perishable items that are put on sale especially during paydays. Pasta, condiments, sauces and canned items are some of the things you can buy ahead and store in your pantry. The savings you will generate can go a long way in stretching your food budget for the holidays.

Find a one-stop shop for your meat purchases. Monterey meatshops are conveniently located and have a wide variety of meat selections for every cooking need.

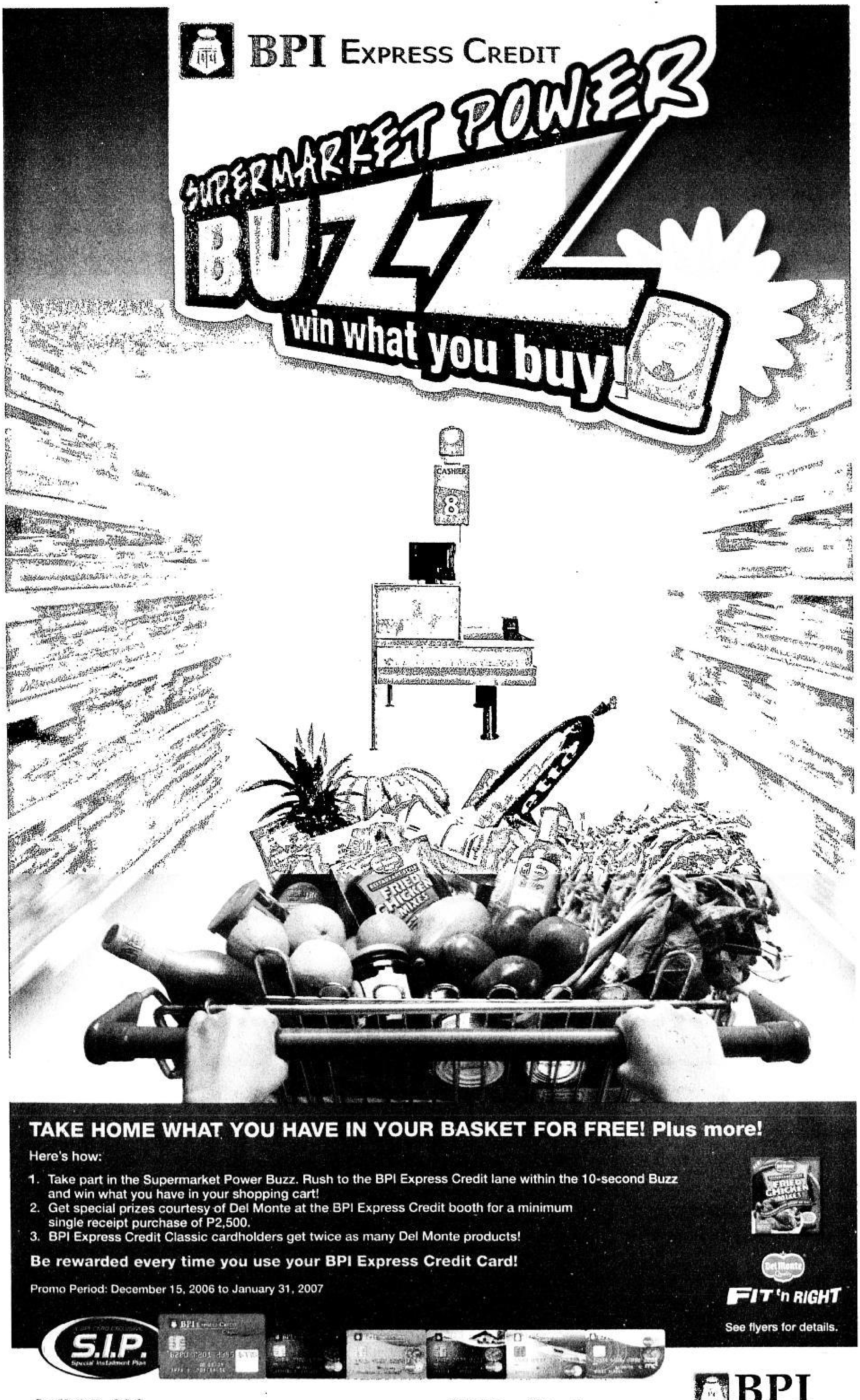
If you have balikbayan relatives coming home for the holidays, prepare a menu that will give them a good sampling of the Pinoy fiesta fare that they have been craving for. Kaldereta, Mechado, Morcon and Estofado are some of the dishes you can cook. Monterey has meat cuts suited for these recipes. Another favorite holiday dish is Embutido. You need not go through the intricate process of preparing this dish because Monterey Embutido is available in all Monterey meatshops.

A barbecue or cookout is another option especially if you are entertaining young people. You can involve your teenagers in planning the party from shopping for supplies, to food preparation and even to manning the grills. Pork steak, pork tenderloin, countrystyle pork, pork kebabs, baby back ribs and boneless pork chop are some of the meat cuts suitable for these.

If your guests are steak lovers, Monterey also has a fine selection. Choose from T-bone, Porterhouse, Prime rib, Ribeye, New York Cut, Sirloin and Tenderloin.

Monterey also has special meat products that will make it easier for you to prepare some of the more popular Asian dishes. Some of these are the pork sukiyaki, Korean beef and Asian chili beef.

So for a hassle-free holiday meal preparation visit any Monterey Meatshop nearest your neighborhood or call 633-MEAT (6328) in Metro Manila or 254-MEAT (6328) in Metro Cebu for delivery.



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MARIE-FRANCE ARCILLA JANET SUSAN R. NEPALES

Kyle Gass stars as "KG" and Jack Black plays "JB" in New Line Cinema's musical comedy, Tenacious D in The Pick of Destiny.

Pinay performer a hit in off-Broadway show

...and Mel Gibson takes the hot seat, gingerly

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—IT HAS BEEN ALMOST A week since we saw **Marie-France Arcilla** in her 1960s-inspired off-Broadway show, "Shout! The Mod Musical," but her songs are still playing in our head.

My wife Janet and I were expecting a fun show—we got that, plus more. Marie-France (daughter of **Emy Arcilla**, whom we remember as PBA commentator in the 1970s, and **Abigail Banzon**) and four other actresses play women coming of age in "shagadelic" England when Petula Clark, the Beatles and Mary Quant ruled. Each of the cast went by the color of her groovy costumes. Marie-France, who played Blue, told us when we met her after the show that blue happens to be her favorite color.

We're back in LA, but I'm still whistling the La Salle/Ateneo graduate's songs, which include "Don't Sleep In The Subway," "Diamonds Are Forever" (which she sang with the panache of **Shirley Bassey** and the allure of a James Bond girl), "You're My World" and "Talk About Love." **Marie-France**, **Erin Crosby** (Yellow), **Julie Dingman Evans** (Orange), **Erica Schroeder** (Green) and **Denise Summerford** (Red) also kept the audience in stitches with amusing skits and gags involving letters to an advice columnist, quizzes and advertisements which were all done in a winking nod to that psychedelic era.

The crowd at the **Julia Miles** Theater lapped it up—we clapped and sang along. By the end of the show, we all stood up to applaud Marie-France and her cast mates as they sang one rousing 1960s anthem after another: "Those Were The Days" (brought me back to my Spelling Bee days!), "Shout!" and "Downtown."

Marie-France is now in Manila for a much-deserved three-week Christmas break after the show closed last weekend. The musical racked up 20 previews and 163 regular performances. Congratulations, Marie-France! For someone who moved to New York only in 2002, she rose from the ranks real fast.

'Tenacious D,' the movie

Jack Black may star with **Jude Law** and lovelies **Cameron Diaz** and **Kate Winslet** in "The Holiday"—imagine the "School of Rock" star is now sharing lead duties with these three A-listers (playing Kate's romantic interest!)—but in a recent press con for that romantic comedy, reporters were just as interested in Jack's other movie, "Tenacious D in The Pick of Destiny."

Some fans of Jack were not aware that he is a member of a band, Tenacious D, until this film, which chronicles the adventures of what would become the self-proclaimed Greatest Band on Earth, came along. Yes, Jack and Kyle Gass, simply known as The D, have opened for Beck, Tool and Pearl Jam. And their debut CD, "Tenacious D," was a platinum seller in 2001.

Now, The D star in their own movie which also features veteran rockers Meat Loaf and **Ronnie James Dio**, with **Ben Stiller** as one of the executive producers. But "Tenacious D in The Pick of Destiny" is Jack's baby, every step of the way.

"The movie marks my first time of being involved in every aspect of the film production," said the actor in such disparate films as "High Fidelity" and "King Kong." "I was a producer and

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Units are affordably available in 2 or 3-bedroom models - all offering attractive payment schemes that allow easy monthly payments.

To know more about **Woodsville Viverde Mansions,** please visit our Model Units at the ground floor of Robinsons Galleria Mall near Ortigas entrance or call **636-0888** or **0922-8380888.**

ROBINSONS LAND CORPORATION
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Pinay performer a hit in off-Broadway show

From page N1

writer. I starred in it. I wrote all the music in there. It was a chance to tell the true story of my band, Tenacious D." He added to much laughter, "I also had to add a lot of lies to make it more exciting."

"I just loved doing the movie," continued the star of "Nacho Libre." "It was because of my band that I have a career at all. It's always just sort of testing how far can we go. Would people enjoy us in a major motion picture? I hope so because I'd like to do another one." The film's soundtrack CD, released by Sony BMG Music Entertainment, is a kick, featuring 15 new songs from The D like "Kickapoo," "Break in City (Storm the Gate)" and "Beelzeboss (The Final Showdown)."

Also included is the track "History of Tenacious D," a repertoire mainstay of The D which is not shy about hyperbole and bills itself as the Hardest Rocking Acoustic Heavy Metal Band in the World. Initial capital letters Jack's, not mine.

Bundle of nerves

Mel Gibson has always been restless at interviews.

In the actor-director's first major press conference since his arrest last July for speeding and drunk driving—when he reportedly screamed anti-Jewish slurs—he seemed more tense and uncomfortable than usual. He picked up a hotel paper napkin in front of him, tossed it back on the table and picked it up again.

Toward the end of the interview to discuss his "Apocalypto," which continues to make him a controversial figure because of the violent content, Mel had rolled and folded the poor napkin so many times that it had become a tiny roll of paper.

When he was asked how he was, Mel replied, "I'm good, I'm good." At the same time, he suddenly tilted his chair backward in an apparent slip, showing how uneasy he was. He was fastidiously dressed in suit and tie, his uniform these days as he made the rounds of media appearances. Looking like he has gained weight, Mel has settled into middle age (50 last January).

He does not miss acting—he prefers directing now. "I am in front of the camera through somebody else," said the man who cut a virile, handsome presence in such movies

MTRCB RATING ▸ GP GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED

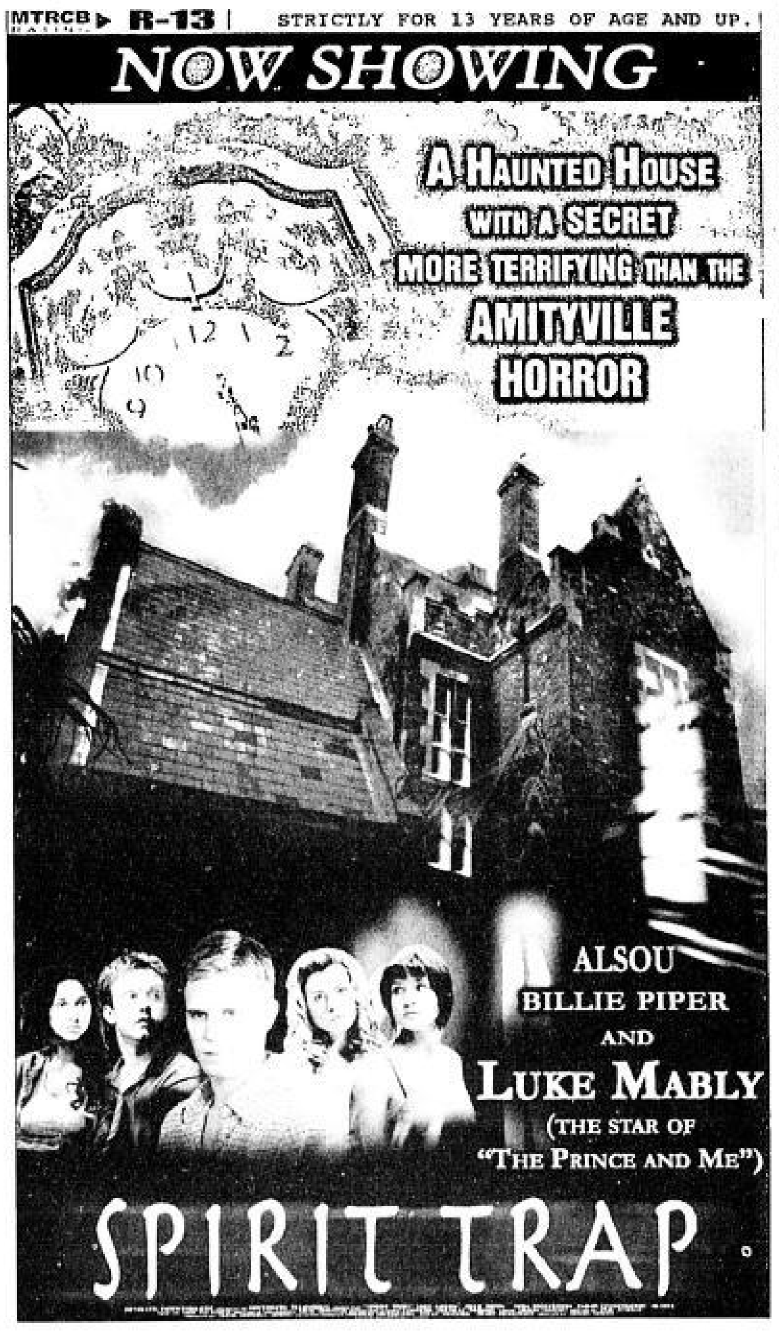
SHOWN AT THE VATICAN AND WAS APPLAUDED SIX TIMES DURING THE SCREENING.

"I'm not an emotional person, but when I finished watching it ... THE TEARS CAME DOWN MY CHEEK. I COULDN'T SPEAK."
Anne Graham Lotz
~NEWSWEEK Magazine
"A DIVINE LOVE STORY comparable to those tearjerkers penned by NICOLAS SPARKS and ERICH SEGAL."
Nancy Rose
~VANITY FAIR Magazine
NEW LINE CINEMA presents
THE NATIVITY STORY
2ND WEEK

MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

NOW SHOWING
THE FINAL BATTLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL
GORDON LIU
STAR of "KILL BILL 1 & 2"
SHAOLIN VS 2 EVIL DEAD

MTRCB RATING ▸ R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP.


NOW SHOWING
A HAUNTED HOUSE WITH A SECRET MORE TERRIFYING THAN THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
ALSOU
BILLIE PIPER
AND
LUKE MABLY
(THE STAR OF "THE PRINCE AND ME")
SPIRIT TRAP

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls Lovemall!

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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2	2 HAPPY FEET	3 SPIRIT TRAP	4 REYNA			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE	2 TENACIOUS D	3 THX CASINO ROYALE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 ALL THE KING'S MEN	5 A GOOD YEAR	6 HAPPY FEET	7 THE NATIVITY
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 TENACIOUS D	2 HAPPY FEET					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX A GOOD YEAR GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	3 THE NATIVITY GUARANTEED SEATS	4 TENACIOUS D GUARANTEED SEATS	5 LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX HAPPY FEET GUARANTEED SEATS	2 A GOOD YEAR	3 THE NATIVITY	4 SPIRIT TRAP	5 TENACIOUS D		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 DECK THE HALLS	2 MEE-SHEE	3 FRAGILE	4 HAPPY FEET			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 HAPPY FEET	2 A GOOD YEAR	3 THE NATIVITY	4 SPIRIT TRAP	5 TENACIOUS D		

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GLORIETTA
Paskong K.O.
December 14 to 15, 2006

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Anson Exhibit
December 11 to 22, 2006

AYALA CENTER CEBU
Christmas Carols w/ One World String Orchestra
December 16, 2006

MARKET! MARKET!
Christmas Goodies Bazaar
December 11 to 15, 2006

GREENBELT
Holiday Harmonies with the Philippine Madrigal Singers
December 2, 9 & 23, 2006

Onstage
Repertory Philippines presents SOUND OF MUSIC
at REP's Globe Theater - November 11 to December 17, 2006
For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM
Watch RILES: LIFE ON THE TRACKS.
A documentary by acclaimed Filipino director Ditsi Carolino
December 15, 2006 / 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

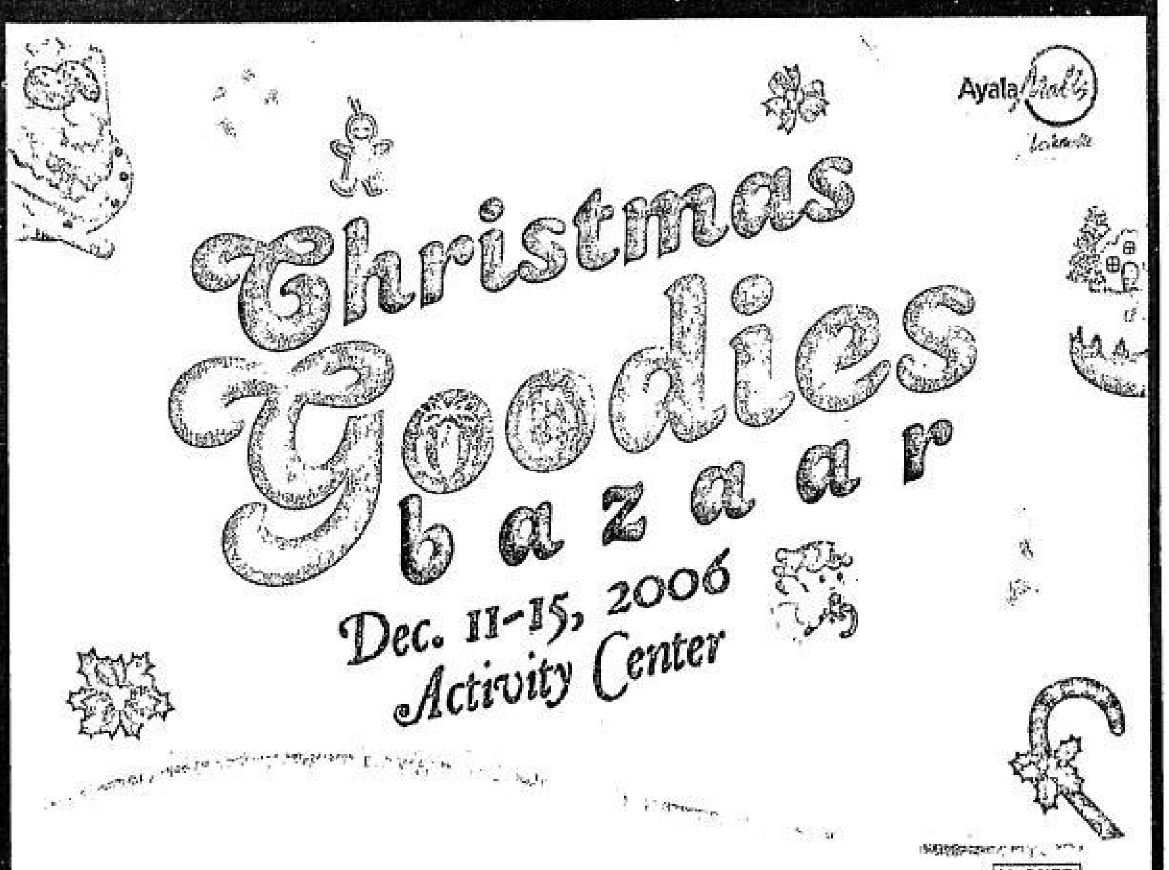
Ayala Malls CINEMAS
Stargazing at the Glorietta 4 PARK
Enteng Kabisote 3
MATAKOT KA SA KARMA
glorietta

featuring the stars of
ENTENG KABISOTE 3
&
MATAKOT KA SA KARMA

December 17 (Sunday), 2006
6:00 PM
Glorietta 4 Park

Reserved seats for the first 200 moviegoers who will present any movie tickets purchased in any Ayala Malls Cinemas on Dec. 17, 2006.

The movies Enteng Kabisote 3 & Matakot Ka Sa Karma opens Dec. 25 at Ayala Malls Cinemas


Ayala Malls
Christmas Goodies bazaar
Dec. 11-15, 2006
Activity Center
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Join us also in our cooking workshops to spice up your holiday celebrations!

GIBSON: A bundle of nerves

as the "Mad Max" series and "The Year of Living Dangerously," partly filmed in the Philippines.

The Oscar and Golden Globe Award-winning director for "Braveheart" is a brilliant filmmaker but critics decry his unrestrained penchant to show gore and violence. Some reviewers wrote that "Apocalypto," set in the Mayan civilization, could have been the best action-adventure to come out of Hollywood this year—if only Mel knew when to stop showing squirting blood, rolling heads, impalement, bludgeoning ... the list goes on. Several critics asserted that Apocalypto makes "The Passion of the Christ," his previous movie which also ignited a lot of controversy but eventually earned a lot of money all over the world and made him a very rich man, seem like kiddie fare.

Odd jokes

IF YOU find something deep or thrillingly juvenile in his new movie, you are welcome to it, the New York-born, Australia-raised filmmaker said essentially. "You try and make them so that everyone gets something from it," he stated unabashedly. The movie topped the US box-office race last weekend.

As if to relieve his tension during the press con, Mel resorted to old jokes, which drew a lot of laughs but which some found inappropriate (one joke involved the "f" word). At one point he quipped, in response to an innocuous question ("Tell us something that we don't know about you"): "Perhaps you've noticed me shifting uncomfortably in my chair. I was circumcised 36 hours ago."

Keep in mind that imagery. Most of his answers below seemed humorous, and he smiled and laughed, but the man speaking them was a bundle of nerves.

You shot this film in Mexico, you came home and you had an "incident." Where are you now after going through all that?

I'm good, I'm good. You know, as balanced as I'm going to get—which is just a little off center, I'd say (laughter). Life is a process of learning about yourself, others, and many things that perhaps you haven't contemplated before. We're full of flaws, anxieties, fears. That's what this film is about—the fears. It's one horror—even spiders crawling on that guy at one point. I feel good on the journey.

You were in Mexico for a long time so we assume that you know it's a culture rich in proverbs. One of them is, "A child and a drunk always tell the truth." What do you think of that?

That's patently false. A child is not very well-informed. A drunk is out of his right mind. He's insane. You're not operating in the right mind. You are literally affecting your brain cells with this stuff.

You were honored by the Latin Business Association for this film. But the Los Angeles Times wrote that the association made a bad decision in giving you its Chairman's Visionary Award. What was your reaction?

(The critical piece, titled "Honoring 'El Mel,'" printed last Nov. 4, concluded: "It's one thing to acknowledge a work's artistic and cultural merits and quite another to proclaim Gibson a 'visionary,' especially at a time when the immigration debate has reminded Latinos that virulent racism is only a few drinks away.")

I don't read anything. It's all a bunch of horseshit anyway so why should I read it? Why should I have my mind tainted by it?

If you could have a new beginning, what would you do?

I'd get a new tailor (laughter). I don't know a new beginning. Everybody wants a new beginning. Everybody wants to know what he knows now and zip it back about 30 years and see if they could start again. Everybody wants that because we all make mistakes.

(More on Sunday)

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

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THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

Meet Nick Naylor, the chief spokesman of the Academy for Tobacco Studies, whose job is to be in favor to smokers and cigarette makers. Usually confronted by conservative lawmakers (who legislates on putting poison labels on every pack), Naylor resets the agenda by devising ways to shut up cancer patients to speak against smoking and by enlisting an A-List Hollywood director to make smoking "cool" in movies. But at the end of the day, the curiosity of his son about his job makes Naylor think another perspective for their future.

WARNING: Watching this movie is not dangerous to your health.

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MTRCB Rating: R-13

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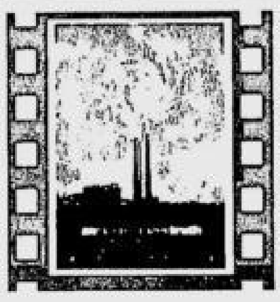

GRIDIRON GANG

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GRIDIRON GANG
Exclusively at The BLOCK (SM North Edsa)

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104

IMAX
HAPPY FEET IN 2D
6:00PM 8:20PM 10:40PM
Matinee Fee- P200 Primetime Fee- P250
T-REX IN 3D
10:30AM 11:45AM 1:00PM 2:15PM 3:30PM 4:45PM
Admission Price- P200

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
4 TENACIOUS D
5 THANK YOU FOR SMOKING
6 BARCELONA

PREMIERE CINEMA
THE RETURN/ THE NATIVITY

CENTERSTAGE
HAPPY FEET

THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
TENACIOUS D
CINEMA 2
A GOOD YEAR
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452

1 GRIDIRON GANG
2 BARCELONA
3 INANG YAYA
4 HAPPY FEET
5 TENACIOUS D
6 THE NATIVITY
7 HAPPY FEET
8 SPIRIT TRAP
9 WAG KANG LILINGON
10 REYNA
11 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
12 CASINO ROYALE

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901

1 THE NATIVITY
2 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 HAPPY FEET
5 INANG YAYA
6 TENACIOUS D
7 BARCELONA
8 SPIRIT TRAP
9 THE RETURN
10 WAG KANG LILINGON
11 REYNA
12 FRAGILE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749

1 THE NATIVITY
2 TENACIOUS D
3 FRAGILE
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 WAG KANG LILINGON
6 REYNA
7 HAPPY FEET
8 INANG YAYA
9 THE RETURN
10 SPIRIT TRAP
11 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
12 BARCELONA

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416

1 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
2 HAPPY FEET
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 BARCELONA
5 WAG KANG LILINGON
6 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
7 THE NATIVITY
8 SPIRIT TRAP
9 REYNA
10 TENACIOUS D

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488

1 HAPPY FEET
2 AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
3 TENACIOUS D
4 BARCELONA
5 THE NATIVITY
6 WAG KANG LILINGON

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888

1 THE NATIVITY
2 TENACIOUS D
3 SPIRIT TRAP
4 HAPPY FEET
5 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
6 CASINO ROYALE
7 REYNA
8 WAG KANG LILINGON
9 BARCELONA

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055

1 A GOOD YEAR
2 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
3 REYNA
4 THE NATIVITY

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240

1 TENACIOUS D
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 THE NATIVITY
4 FRAGILE
5 HAPPY FEET
6 CASINO ROYALE
7 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
8 BARCELONA
9 WAG KANG LILINGON
10 REYNA
11 THE RETURN
12 INANG YAYA

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04

1 HAPPY FEET
2 THE RETURN
3 SANTA CLAUSE 3
4 FEAST

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917

1 THE NATIVITY
2 THE RETURN
3 CAKE
4 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975

1 THE NATIVITY
2 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
3 HAPPY FEET
4 REYNA

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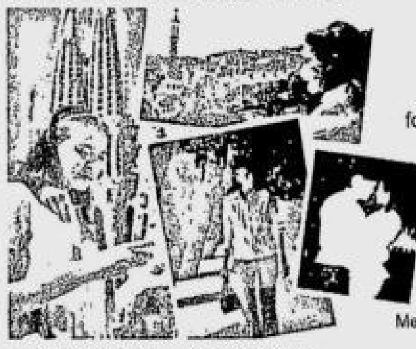

BARCELONA

A must-see SM Cinema Exclusive digital movie for OFWs, their families and relatives this Holiday season

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Alessandra De Rossi, Luis Alandy, Alan Paule and Robert Arevalo
Directed by Gil M. Portes

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SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868

1 REYNA
2 INANG YAYA
3 DECK THE HALLS
4 SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD
5 CASINO ROYALE
6 WAG KANG LILINGON
7 TENACIOUS D
8 HAPPY FEET

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45

1 HAPPY FEET
2 THE MARINE
3 FRAGILE
4 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
5 WAG KANG LILINGON
6 BARCELONA

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17

1 HAPPY FEET
2 ANG PAMANA
3 THE RETURN
4 DECK THE HALLS

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04

1 ZU WARRIORS
2 HAPPY FEET
3 REYNA
4 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 THE RETURN
3 THE MARINE
4 BARCELONA
5 MEE-SHEE
6 INANG YAYA

SM CIY LIPA (043) 756-7925

1 STEP UP
2 HAPPY FEET
3 THE RETURN
4 SANTA CLAUISE 3

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80

1 THE MARINE
2 REYNA
3 BOA
4 WAG KANG LILINGON

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39

1 SANTA CLAUISE 3
2 BOA
3 HAPPY FEET
4 ANG PAMANA

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160

1 DECK THE HALLS
2 MEE-SHEE
3 ZU WARRIORS
4 A GOOD YEAR

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66

1 DECK THE HALLS
2 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
3 SANTA CLAUSE 3
4 HAPPY FEET

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876

1 THE MARINE
2 MEE-SHEE
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 DECK THE HALLS
5 BARCELONA
6 FRAGILE
7 HAPPY FEET
8 BOA

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422

1 MEE-SHEE
2 CASINO ROYALE
3 HAPPY FEET
4 ZU WARRIORS
5 THE NATIVITY
6 RESERVED
7 RESERVED
8 FRAGILE

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998

1 MEE-SHEE
2 BARCELONA
3 FRAGILE
4 THE NATIVITY
5 FEAST
6 HAPPY FEET

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884

1 HAPPY FEET
2 CAKE
3 FRAGILE
4 BOA

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 CASINO ROYALE • THX
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

2 HAPPY FEET
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

3 SA ILALIM NG COGON
12:00 1:50 3:40 5:30 7:20 9:10

4 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

5 TENACIOUS D
1:30 3:35 5:40 7:45 9:50

6 SPIRIT TRAP
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

7 THE NATIVITY STORY
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 REYNA
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

9 BORAT 12:30 2:35
A GOOD YEAR 5:00 7:30 10:00

10 KAMA SUTRA 3
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 TENACIOUS D
12:35 2:50 5:05 7:25 9:50

2 REYNA 12:00 1:50 3:40
THE NATIVITY STORY 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 HAPPY FEET
11:00 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

4 CASINO ROYALE
11:00 1:40 4:20 7:00 9:50

5 SPIRIT TRAP
12:35 2:50 5:05 7:25 9:50

6 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
12:35 2:50 5:05 7:25 9:50

7 KAMA SUTRA 3
12:35 2:50 5:05 7:25 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193/682-8199

1 REYNA
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

2 HAPPY FEET
11:05 1:35 4:05 6:35 9:05

3 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
11:30 1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10

4 THE NATIVITY STORY
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

5 TENACIOUS D
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

6 KAMA SUTRA 3
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

7 CASINO ROYALE
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

8 SPIRIT TRAP
11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

NOVALICHES 935-3237/935-3229-30

1 CASINO ROYALE
2 HAPPY FEET
3 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
4 REYNA

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 MAKAMUNDO
2 REYNA
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 TENACIOUS D
2 HAPPY FEET
3 SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD 2
4 SPIRIT TRAP

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MTRCB Rating: R-18

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 SANTA CLAUSE 3
3 MY FIRST WEDDING
4 DECK THE HALLS

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 HAPPY FEET
2 THE RETURN
3 SANTA CLAUSE 3
4 STEP UP

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 FEAST
2 ANG PAMANA:THE INHERITANCE
3 A GOOD YEAR
4 HAPPY FEET

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 THE MARINE
2 ZU WARRIORS
3 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
4 MEE-SHEE

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 HAPPY FEET
2 DECK THE HALLS
3 FEAST
4 REYNA

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 HAPPY FEET
2 MEE-SHEE
3 REYNA
4 THE RETURN
5 FRAGILE
6 THE MARINE

BACOLOD (034) 441-0463 (034) 441-0459

1 FRAGILE
2 ZU WARRIORS
3 HAPPY FEET
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 SANTA CLAUSE 3
6 REYNA

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1 FRAGILE
2 THE NATIVITY STORY
3 HAPPY FEET
4 REYNA

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The annual musical tradition draws individual band performers all year round in selected venues all over the country.

All events are open to those 18 years old and above.

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.

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DIEGO LLORICO IC MENDOZA BELLIE FLORES
& EDDIE GARCIA
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CASINO ROYALE 007 **PG13** 1:05,4:00,6:55,9:50	**HAPPY FEET** **G** 1:10,3:30,5:50,8:10	**A GOOD YEAR** **PG13** 2:30,5:00,7:30,10:00
TENACIOUS D IN: THE PICK OF DESTINY 1:50,4:00,6:10,8:20	**SPIRIT TRAP** **R13** 1:45,3:55,6:05,8:15	**THE NATIVITY STORY** **PG13** 1:20,3:30,5:40,7:50,10:00

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE: FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440/41

SHANG CINEPLEX

① **TENACIOUS D**
MTRCB R-13
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

② **THE NATIVITY**
MTRCB. GP
1:20, 3:30, 5:40 7:50, 10:00

③ **HAPPY FEET**
MTRCB GP
2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

④ **CASINO ROYALE**
MTRCB PG-13 1:25 7:00
A GOOD YEAR
MTRCB PG-13 4:30 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
THE PRODUCERS / RENT
MTRCB PG-13 MTRCB R-13
2:05, 7:15 4:50, 10:00

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

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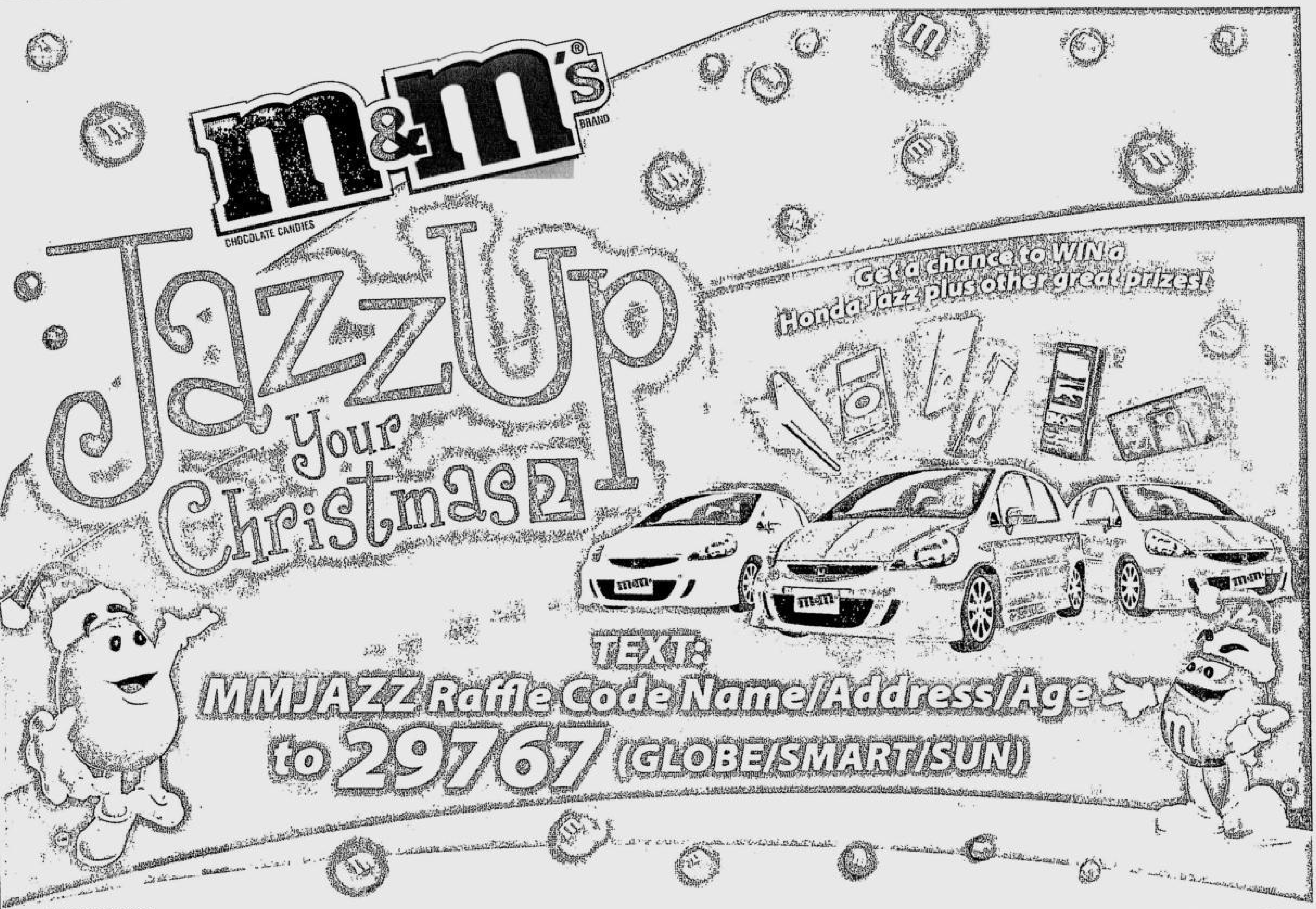
Shangri-La Plaza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   For succeeding entries, just type MMJAZZ Raffle Code
   Example: MMJAZZ B5678
3. M&M's® packs with the Jazz Up Your Christmas 2 stickers must be kept and shall be presented for verification purposes in order to claim the prize.
4. Promo will run from November 1 – December 31, 2006.
5. Prizes include: 3 units Honda Jazz Cars (1.3 Automatic Transmission), 10 units Sony Ericsson K800i Mobile Phones and 50 units Apple Nano I-Pods (4 gb).
6. Draws will be held on: November 22, December 6, December 13 and December 20. Grand draw will be on January 10, 2007.
7. All entries are cumulative. Non-winning entries will qualify for the succeeding draws. The more entries sent, the more chances of winning.
8. Cut-off dates for entries is every Sunday, 11:59pm prior to the draw date. For the Grand Draw, cut-off will be on December 31, 2006, 11:59pm.
9. Draws will be held at the Information Gateway office in the presence of a representative from BFAD, Information Gateway and Master Foods Philippines, Inc.
10. Winners will receive a call with accompanying instructions on how to claim their prize. They must be prepared to surrender the M&M's® chocolate wrapper with the winning raffle code. Damaged, altered and/or tampered stickers, as well as wrappers with no promo stickers and vice versa will be disqualified and rendered invalid.
11. Verification procedures will be enforced to ensure validity and authenticity of the promo sticker and wrapper. Representatives from BFAD and Master Foods Philippines Inc. will conduct the verification procedures.
12. Verified winners will then be eligible to claim their prize.
13. Winners will be announced in 3 major newspapers after the grand draw.
14. Prizes are non-transferable and not convertible to cash.
15. All prizes are tax paid.
16. Children under 13 years old are not eligible to join the promo.
17. Employees of Master Foods Philippines Inc, all their agencies, suppliers, partners and sponsors, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

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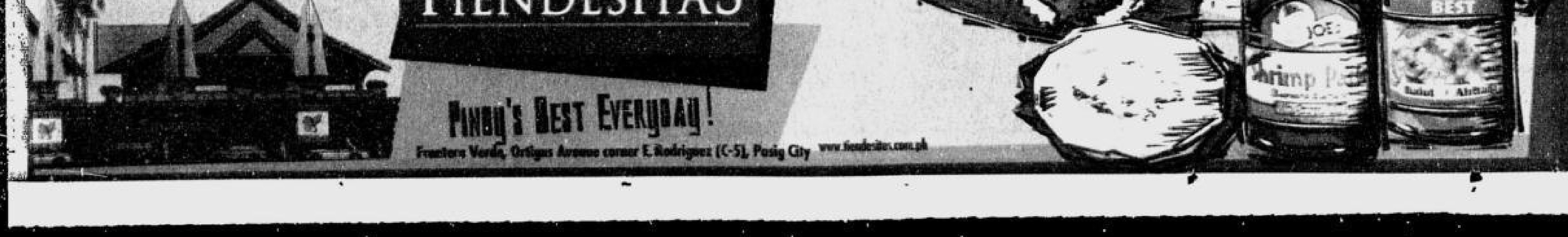
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LIVING Stars

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

FAVORITE NOOKS

THE ACTOR-DIRECTOR is an avid musician. He also painted the art work in the background.

ERIK SANTOS

My favorite nook is my bedroom, where I relax when I'm free from work. I just spend the entire day watching TV and movies on DVD. I also listen to music and play computer games. This room reflects my personality. You can find different shades of blue in it—light blue picture frames, navy blue Roman blinds, sky blue bed covers and an abstract painting entitled "Ocean Blue." Since I have large windows, I put up dark blinds to block sunlight. Even if it's mid-day, it's still dim, cozy and cool in my room. I also like the garden at the back of our house.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

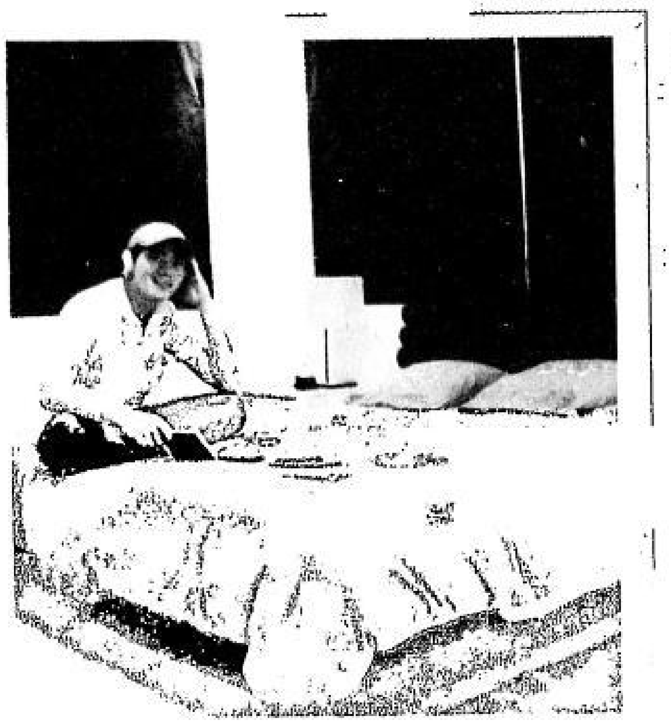

PHOTO BY EDWIN BACASMAS

Playtime in Bulacan

This vacation home allows Cesar Montano's family to go nature-tripping on weekends

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Ryan Lim

CESAR MONTANO'S COUNTRY home somewhere in Bulacan allows the actors' young kids Angelina, Samantha and Francesca to experience "real life," away from the hustle and bustle of show biz.

"Here, they're close to nature. They see trees, plants and animals grow. I encourage them to help in watering plants," Cesar says.

The 2.5-hectare property is strewn with fruit trees like *lanzones*, *avocado*, *santol*, *atis*, *guava*, coconut, *guyabano*, jackfruit and *duhat* and vegetables like eggplant, okra, *pechay* and tomatoes.

Yes, it's one big fruit and veggie bowl for the health buff, who's married to Sunshine Cruz, the similarly fit actress who's his co-star in the Metro Manila Film Festival entry "Ligalig".

"Here, I jog, paint, write and play with the kids," the actor says. "Angelina and Samantha are now addicted to swimming."

The gentleman farmer is also into tilapia and poultry-raising.

"I used to have only big kabir chickens from Israel, but now I also have native chickens. I've gone nationalistic," he jokes.

He sells some of his farm's produce to nearby restaurants, but they also consume some at home. Cesar says, "I always remind my staff: Why do you have to buy okra in the market when we have plenty in our own backyard?"

PLAYTIME/ O4

PHOTOS BY RYAN LIM

CESAR and daughters Angelina and Francesa pose by the jogging path that runs across the 2.5-hectare property.

The Real Causes of WOMEN'S HAIRLOSS

Hair can enhance or ruin a woman's appearance. Deemed her "crowning glory," thick, healthy, lush strands that frame a woman's face can emphasize her beauty and youth. On the contrary, hair loss can do the exact opposite. It can make a woman appear older and less attractive, which can cause low self-esteem, depression and isolation.

There are various triggers of women's baldness. Hormonal changes by far have the biggest impact since they stimulate hair growth *and* cause the actual hairloss. Female Pattern Baldness (or Androgenetic alopecia) is a reaction to male hormones in the body. It is an inherited sensitivity to the effects of male hormones (androgens) on scalp hair follicles.

Stress can also be a contributing factor to women's hairloss. This leads to a severe tension in the scalp, affecting the supply of essential nutrition required for the healthy growth of hair. Hair damage from the use of hair styling treatments and other chemicals also affects the hair condition, making the hair strands weak and causing them to break.

Svenson utilizes various treatments to help women avoid hairloss from occurring. In the case of hairloss that has already started, Svenson also has solutions to prevent it from progressing to more advanced hairloss. With Svenson, women not only get their hair back, they also look younger and better. Call Svenson today at 892-HAIR (4247) for a free consultation.

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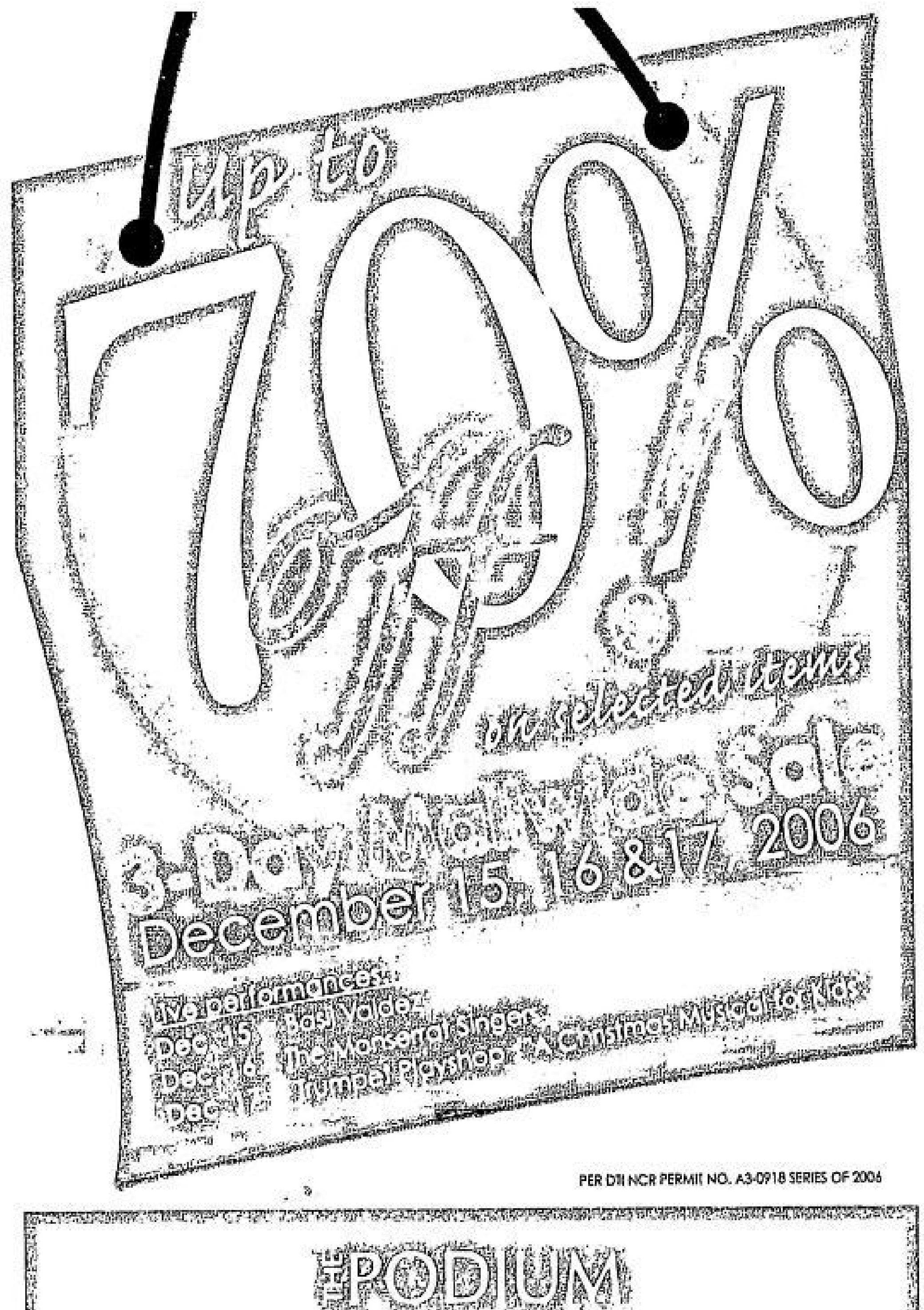
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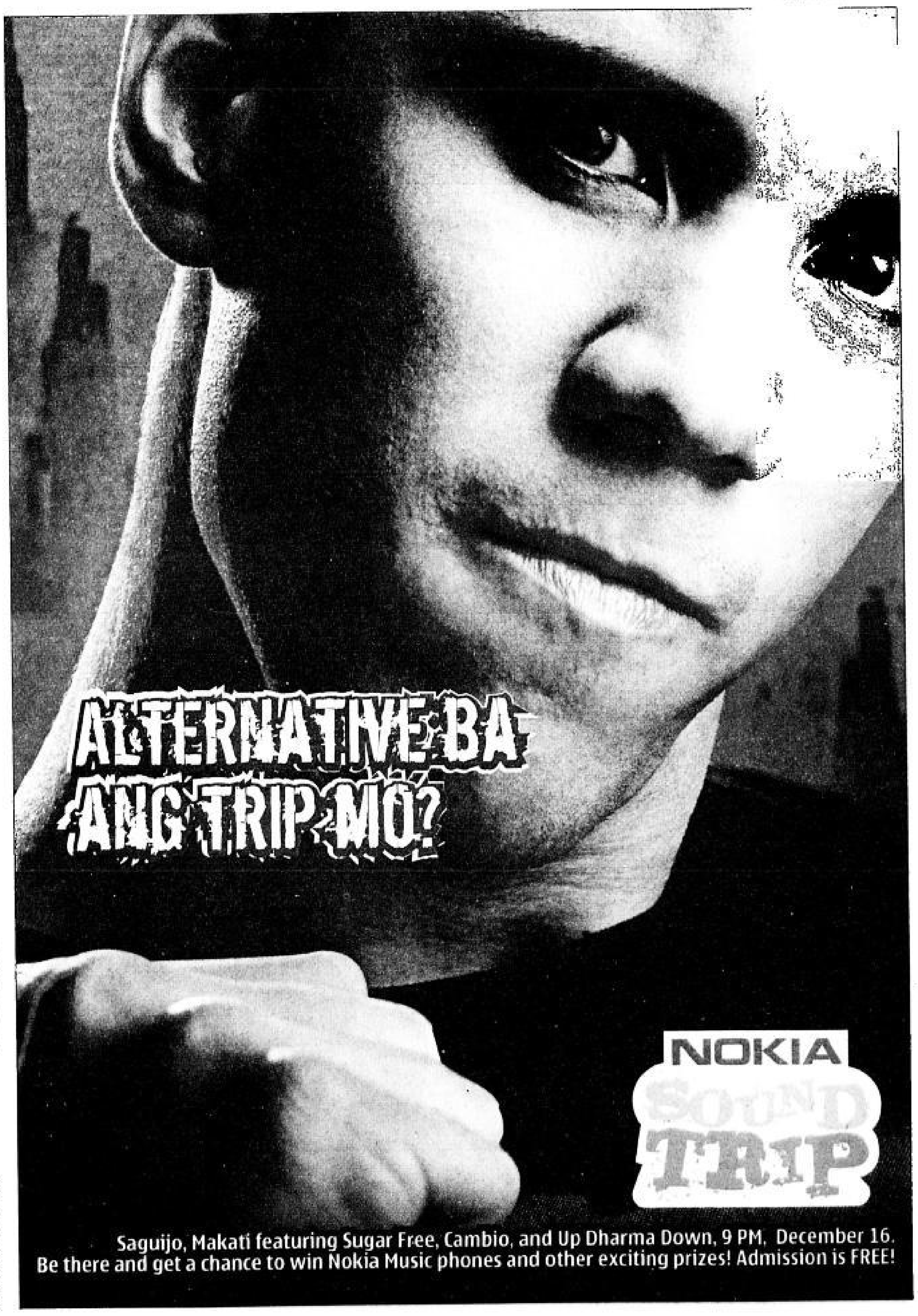
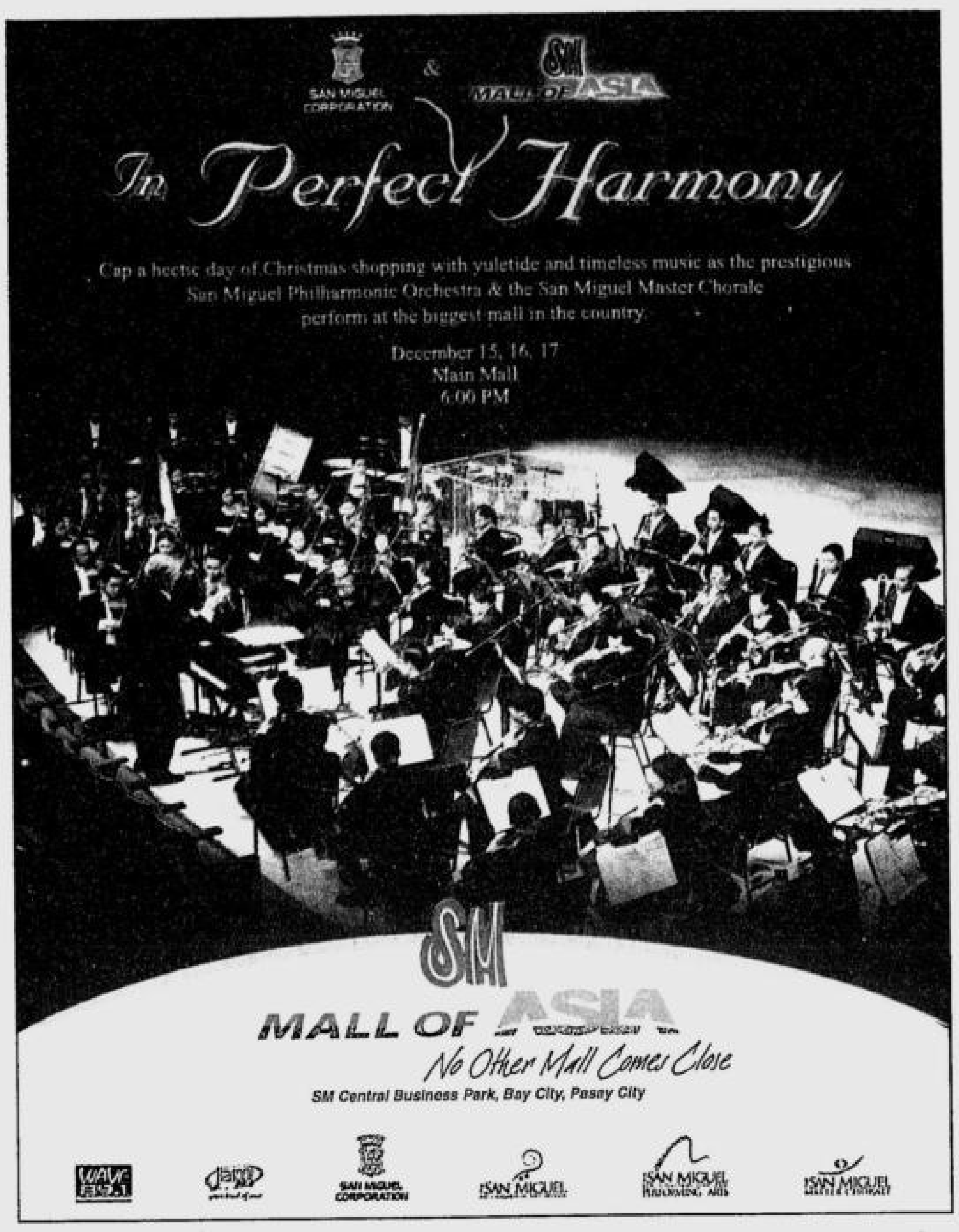


Saguijo, Makati featuring Sugar Free, Cambio, and Up Dharma Down, 9 PM, December 16.
Be there and get a chance to win Nokia Music phones and other exciting prizes! Admission is FREE!

DID YOU KNOW...

BACHELOR JAMIE FOXX HAS A DAUGHTER, CORINNE. HE BROUGHT her to the premiere of "Dreamgirls" at the Wilshire theater in Beverly Hills on Monday. That's Corinne with her dad and Beyonce, at far right. And Chow Yun-Fat is married. He brought his wife, Jasmine Tan, right, to the "Curse of the Golden Flower" Singapore preem on Tuesday. REUTERS



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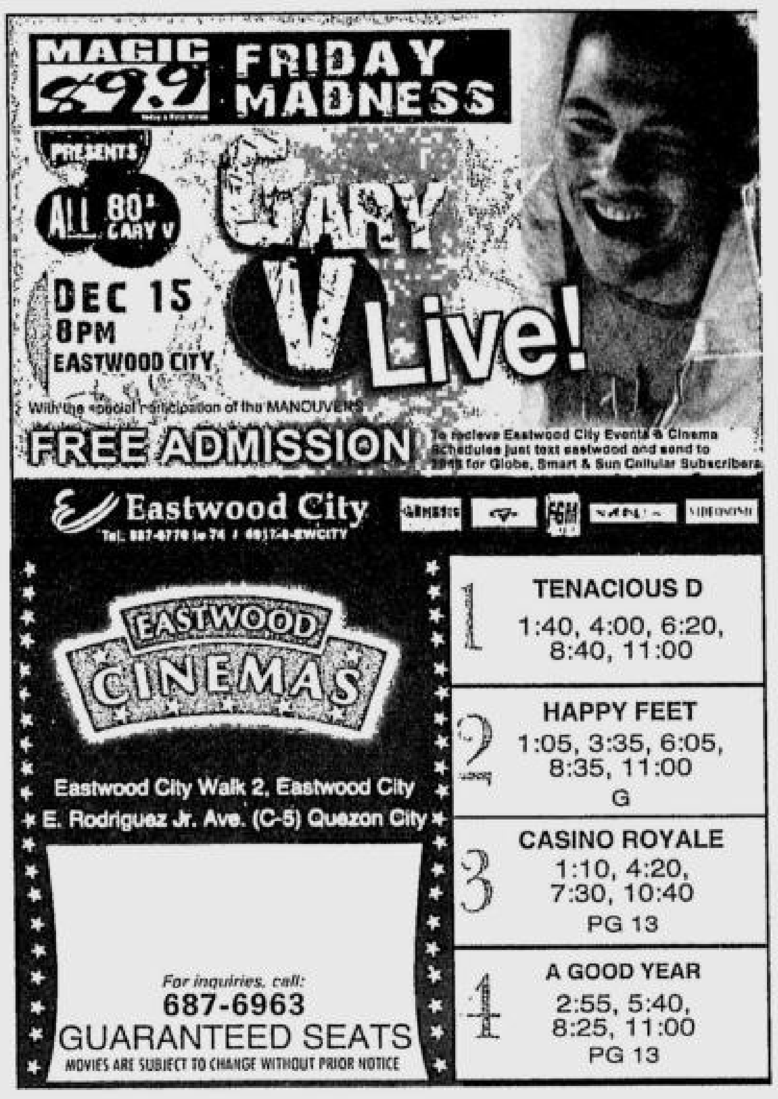

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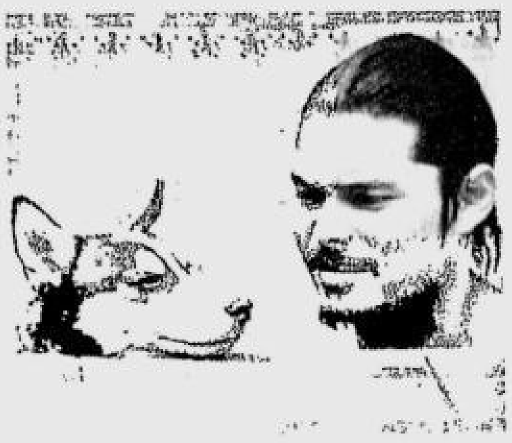
3	CASINO ROYALE	1:10, 4:20, 7:30, 10:40 PG 13
4	A GOOD YEAR	2:55, 5:40, 8:25, 11:00 PG 13



TAIL TALES

DINGDONG DANTES

My Siberian Husky's name is Strider. I named him after my favorite character, Aragorn, from "Lord of the Rings." I got it last summer. He was given to me by Regine (Velasquez). He's big now, and he loves to swim. Enjoy *siya, malikot.* He's almost a year old. When I leave for work, I say goodbye to him. When I get back, I greet him, too. But when I'm staying at home, I'm with him the whole time. I believe our bond can be better if I can give him more of my time, but I make it a point to go to him before going to bed. Strider is my first pet. It's not easy; I ask for assistance in cleaning him up and feeding him, especially when I'm not home. I make it a point that he eats on time. I give him attention, which is the number one thing. *Oliver M. Pulumbarit*

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ALL THE KING'S MEN 1:40 / 4:20 / 7.00 / 9:40	CASINO ROYALE 1:20 / 4:10 / 7:00 / 9:50	INANG YAYA 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40	ALL THE KING'S MEN 1:00 / 3:40 / 6:20 / 9:00

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1	SPIRIT TRAP 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20	2	CASINO ROYALE 12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30	3	TENACIOUS 'D' 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20
4	SHAOLIN vs EVIL DEAD 12:05 R3 / 1:35 / 3:45 / 5:55 / 8:05	5	KAMASUTRA 3 12:10 / 2:10 / 4:10 / 6:10 / 8:10		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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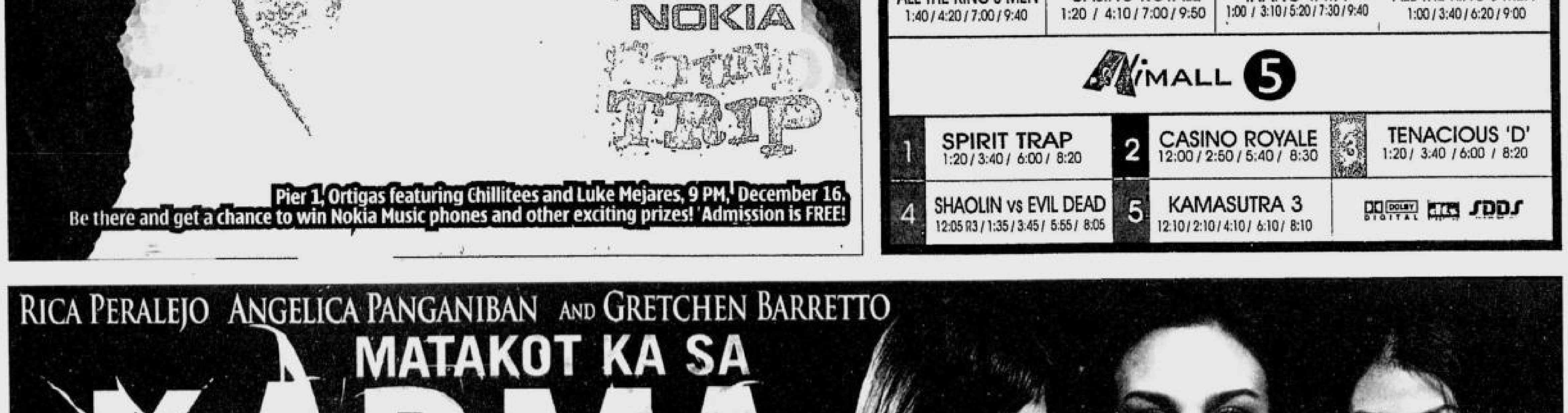

RICA PERALEJO ANGELICA PANGANIBAN AND GRETCHEN BARRETTO
MATAKOT KA SA
KARMA
A FILM BY JOSE JAVIER REYES
IN THEATRES DECEMBER 25, 2006
OFFICIAL ENTRY TO THE METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL 2006

BOOKS

CHERRY PIE PICACHE

I am currently reading two books: Jane Fonda's memoir "My Life So Far" and Wally Lamb's "This Much I Know is True." Jane's book was a gift from Tita Celia Rodriguez, who plays my mom on "Atlantika." Honestly, I am not fascinated with the life stories of celebrities, but when Tita Celia told me about it, I became interested in Jane's journey of healing. The second is a novel, a selection from Oprah's Book Club and tells the story of twin brothers. I prefer self-help and inspirational books, like Paulo Coelho's "The Alchemist" and Mitch Albom's "Tuesdays with Morrie," as well as the romance novels of Nicholas Spark. *Bayani San Diego Jr.*

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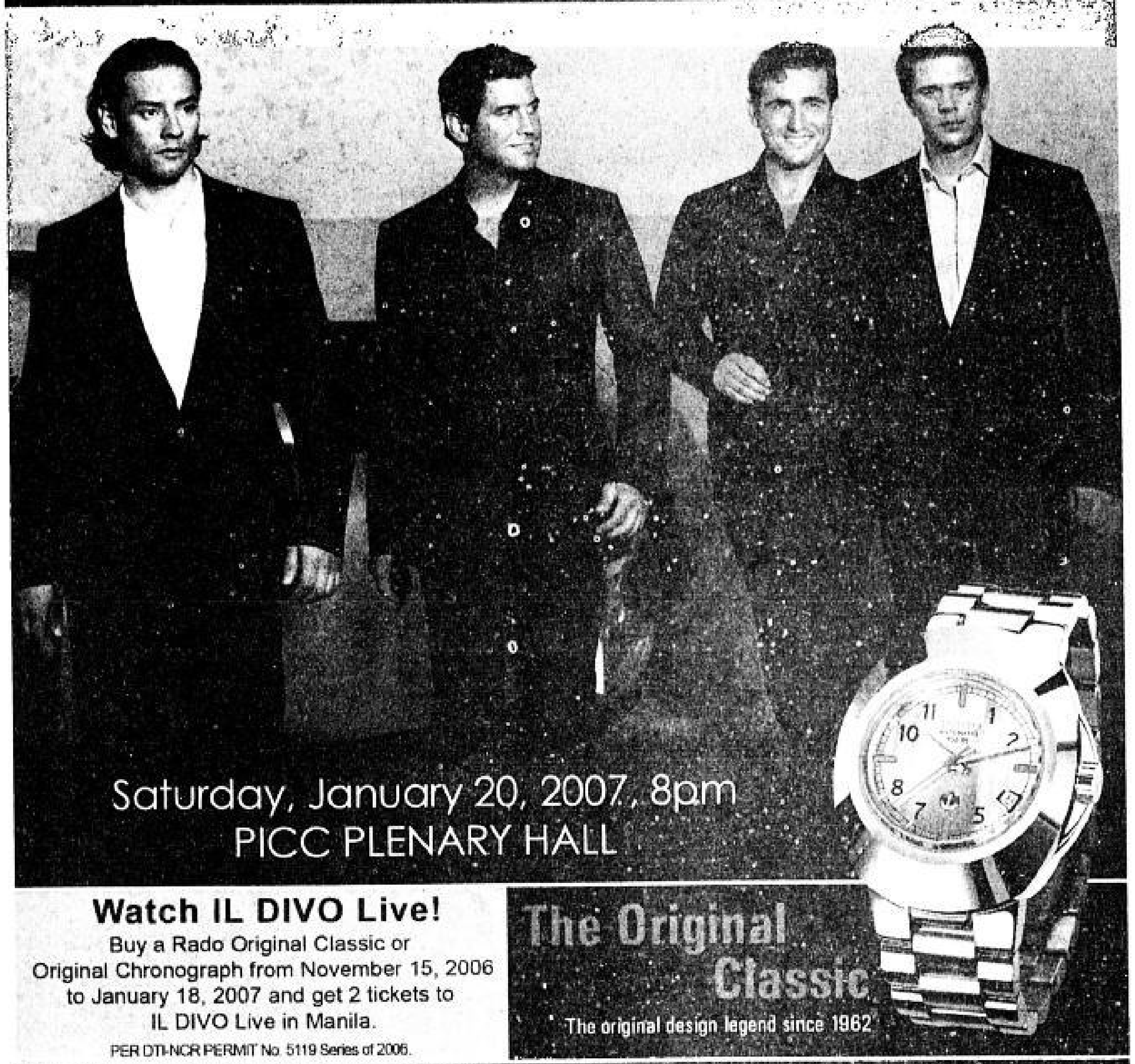

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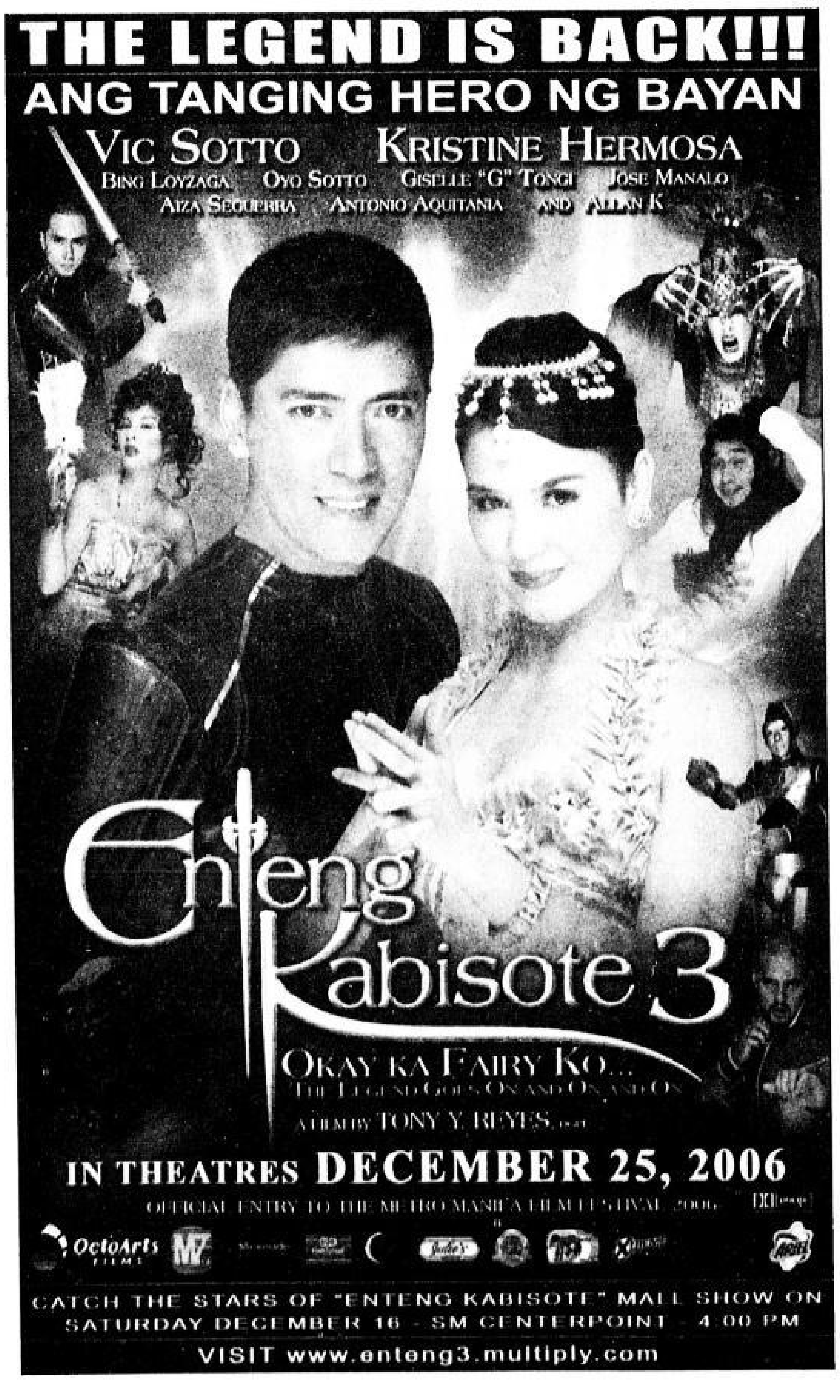

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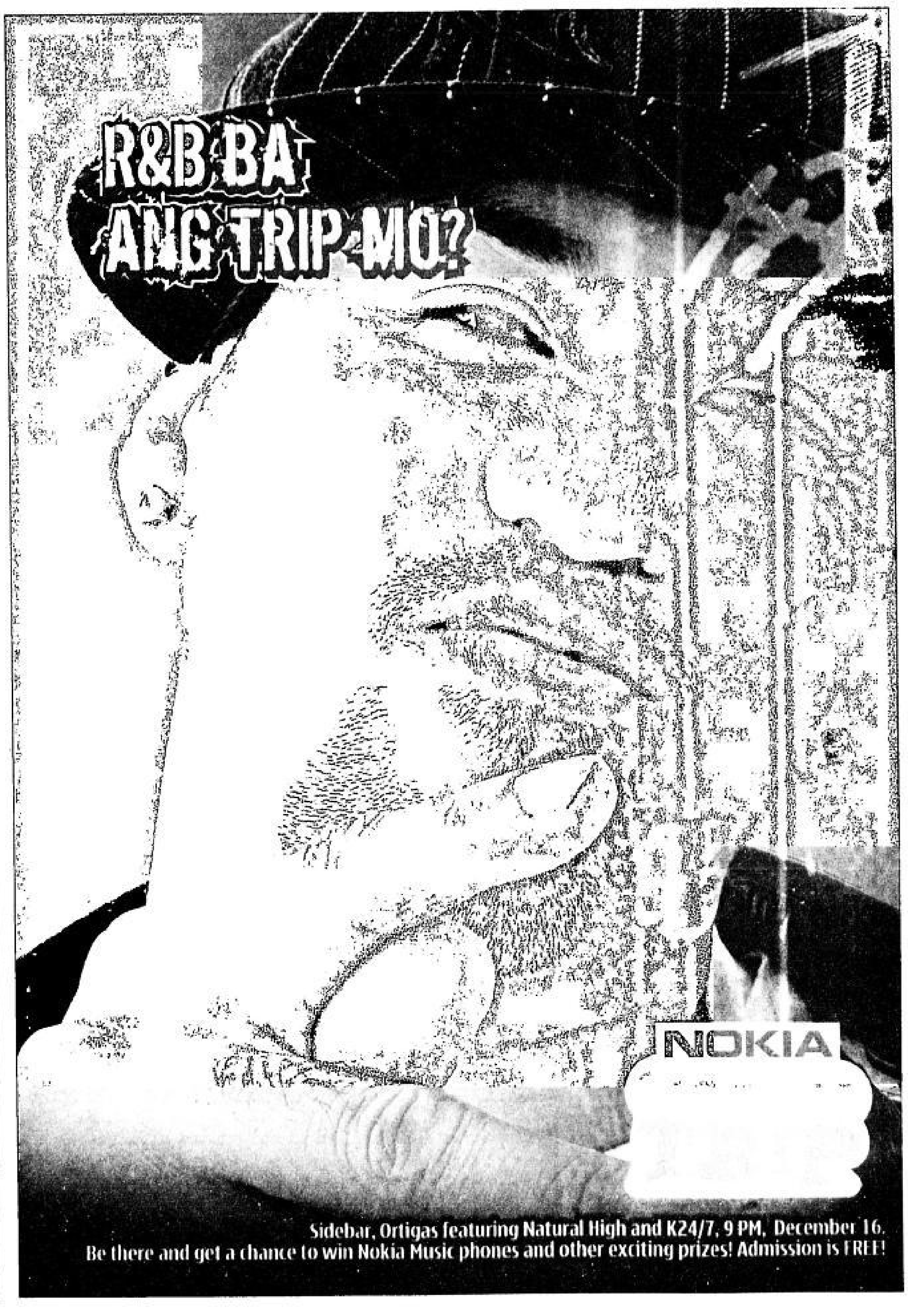

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Sidebar, Ortigas featuring Natural High and K24/7, 9 PM, December 16.
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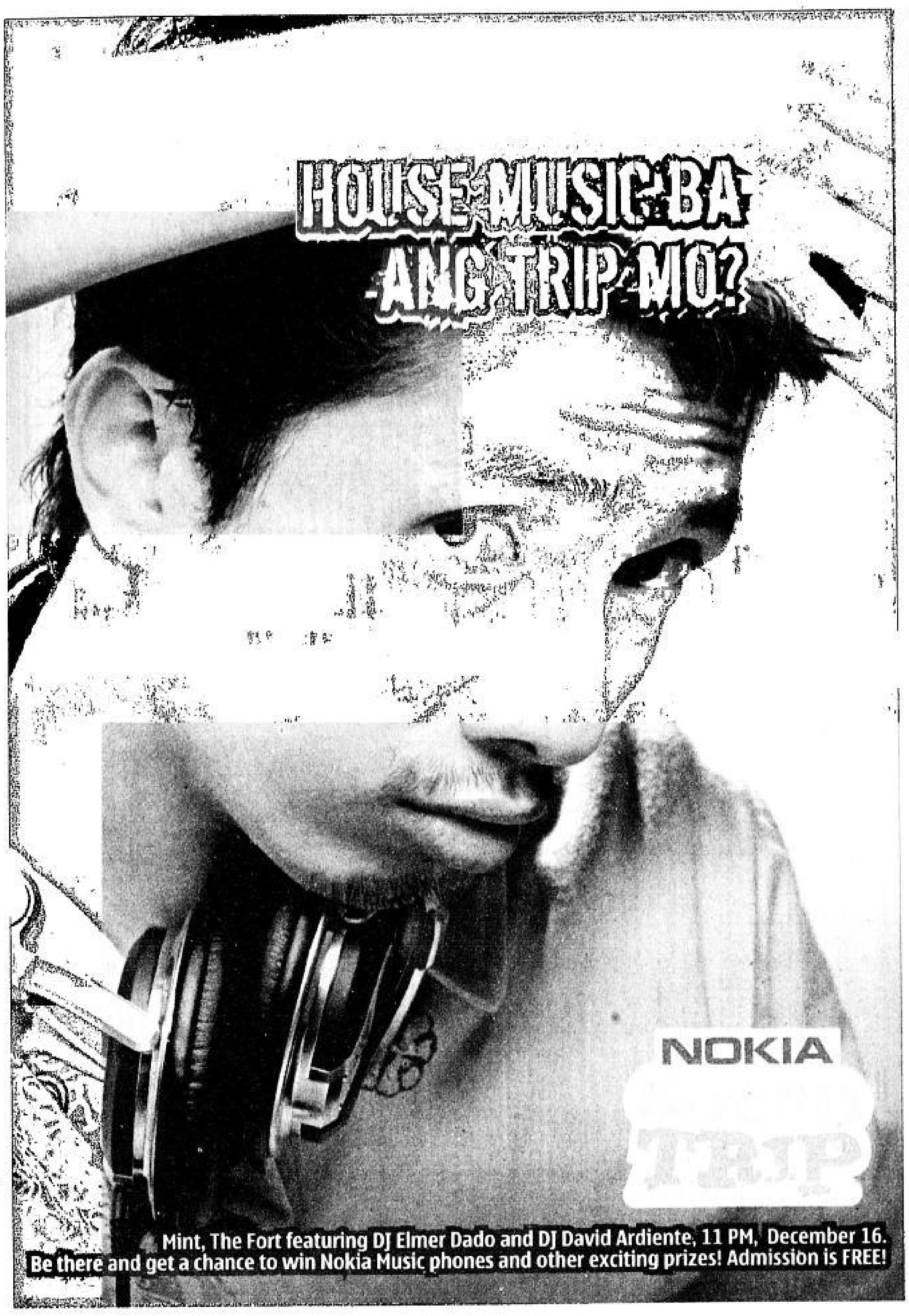
HOUSE MUSIC BA ANG TRIP MO?

NOKIA
TRIP

Mint, The Fort featuring DJ Elmer Dado and DJ David Ardiente, 11 PM, December 16.
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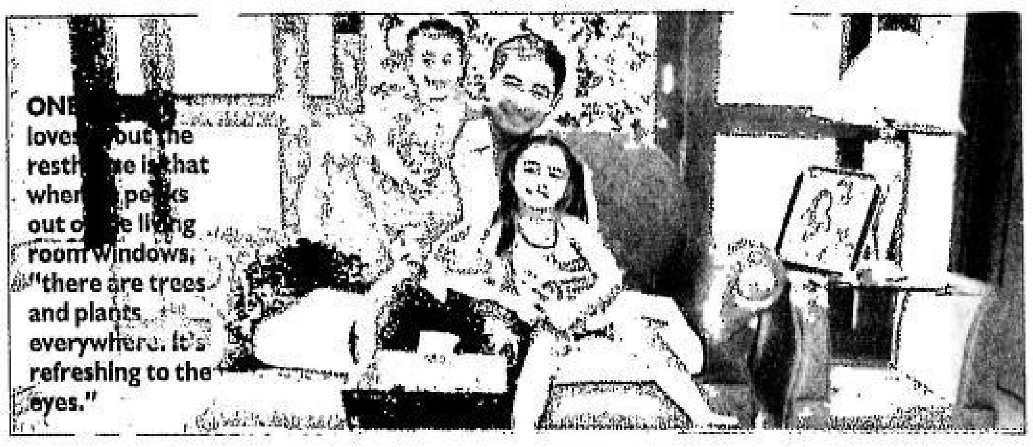
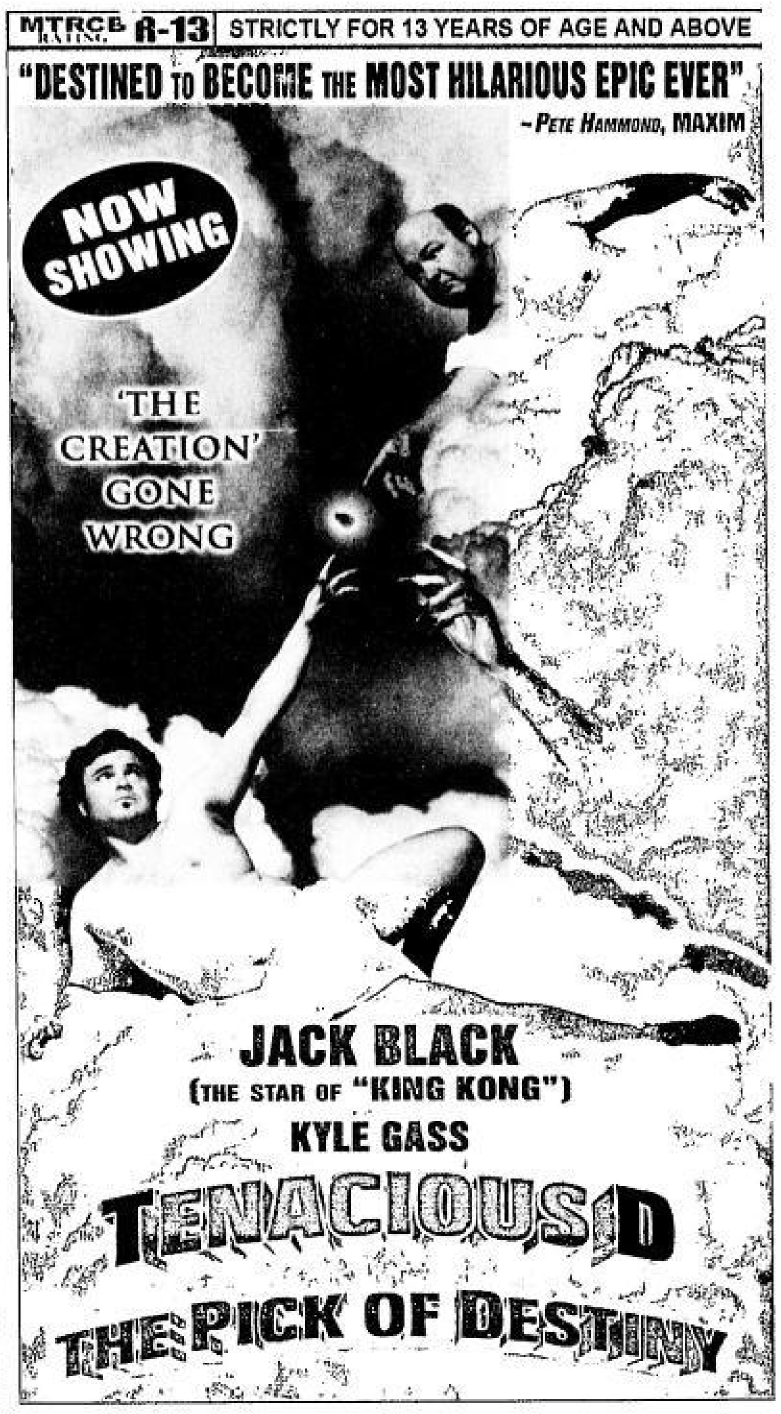


ONE [redacted] loves out the resth e is that when peks out o e living room windows, "there are trees and plants everywhere. It's refreshing to the eyes."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Playtime in Bulacan

From page O1

Rizal influence

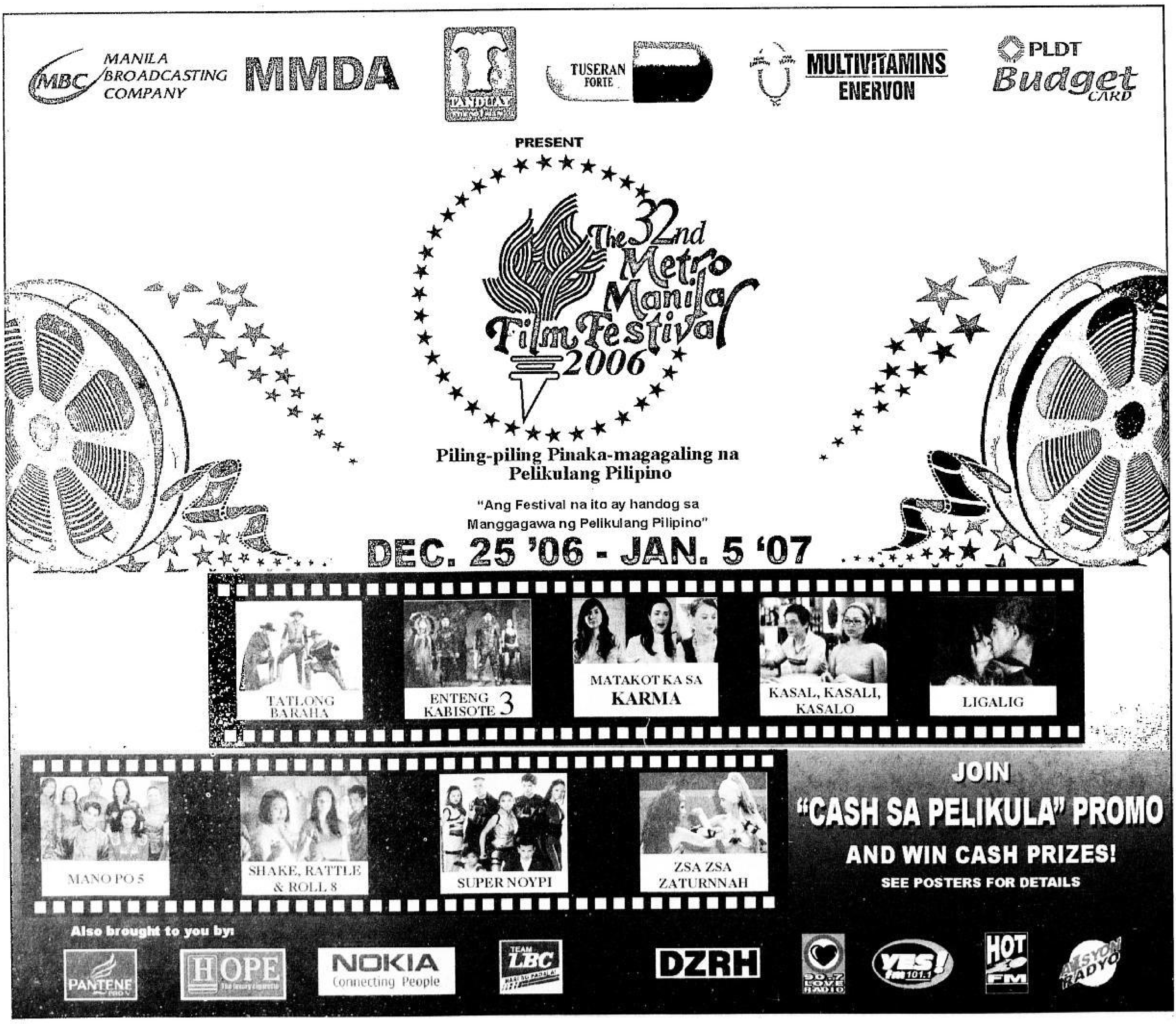
The house architecture is a mix of Asian and Western influences, with turn-of-the-century European lampposts lining the jogging path.

"It must be the Jose Rizal influence," he cracks. Cesar played the national hero in the 1998 movie, "Jose Rizal."

Country living has a positive effect on the kids, he observes—especially on their precocious first child Angelina, who recently co-starred with Cesar in a Coffee-Mate TV commercial.

"I want my kids to realize that not everything can be bought from the grocery store—that we can grow our own food," he points out. "This place is full of life!"

PLAYTIME/ O5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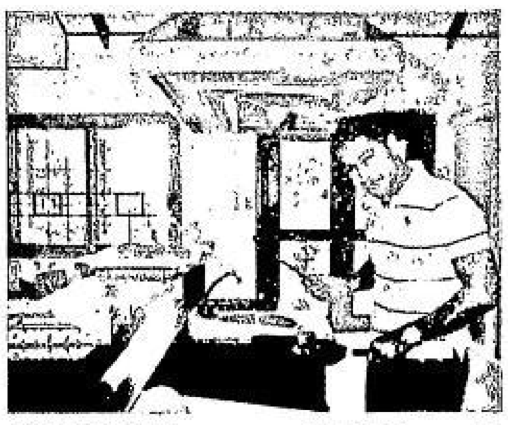
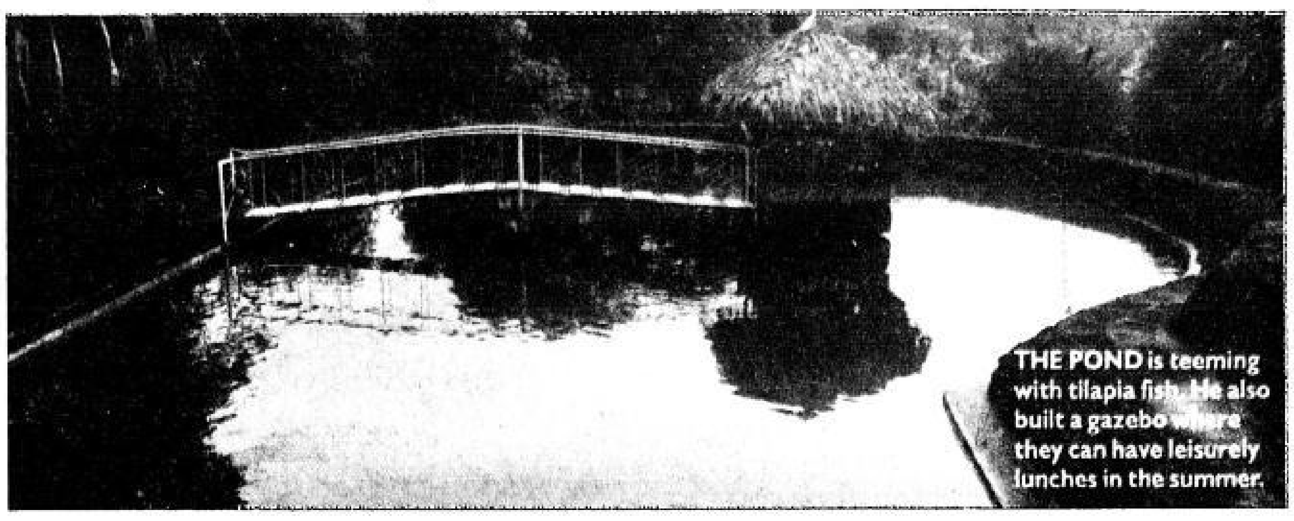


HE KNOWS his way around the kitchen and instructs his staff to avail of the produce in their backyard.



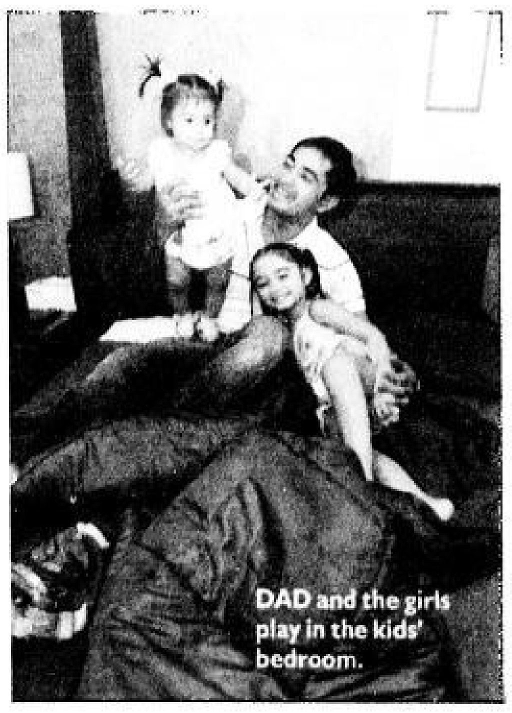
THE POND is teeming with tilapia fish. He also built a gazebo where they can have leisurely lunches in the summer.

IN THE past, he only took care of hefty kabir chickens from Israel. "But there was also a demand for native or Tagalog chickens."

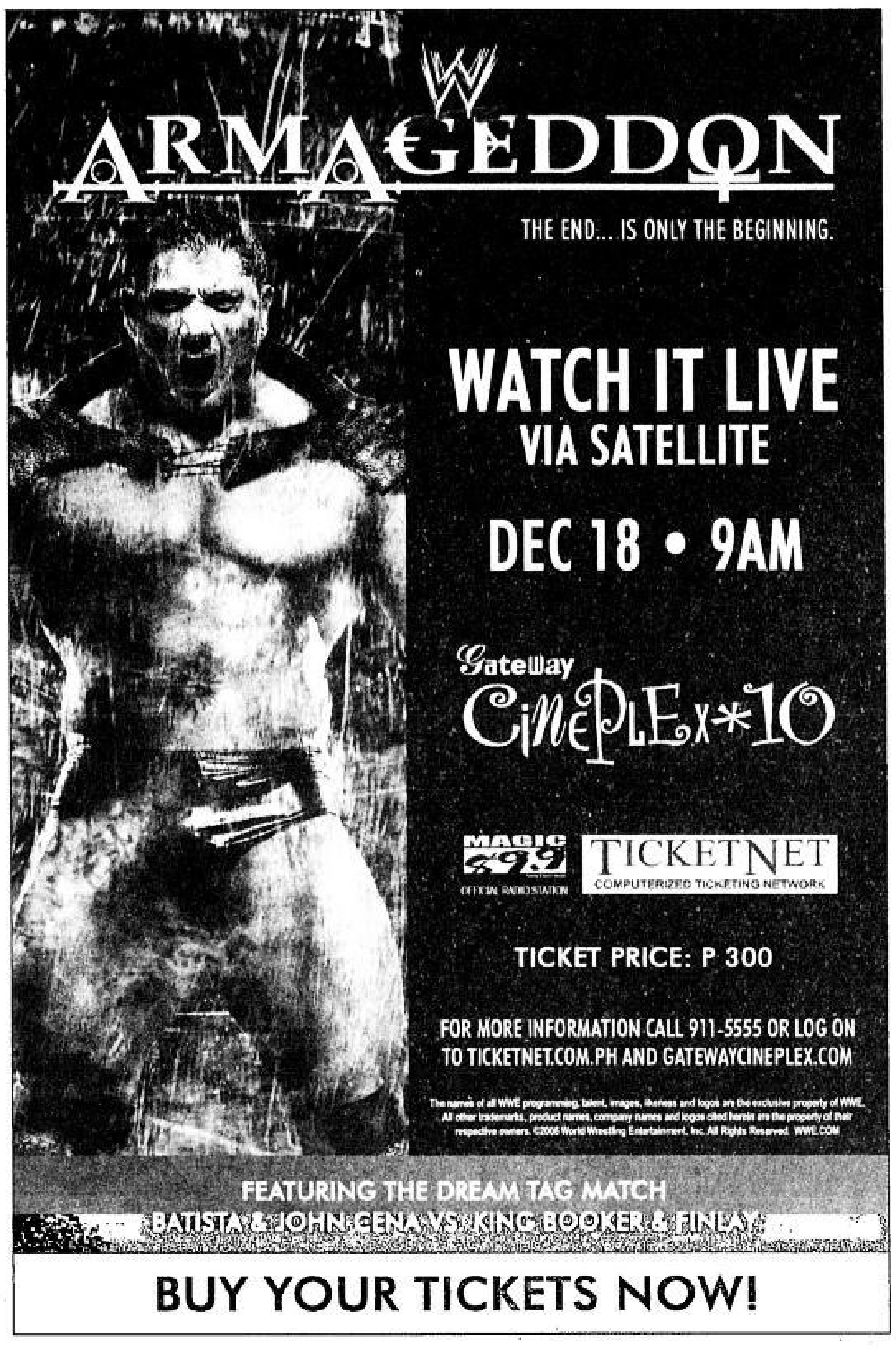
THE COUNTRY home has all the modern accoutrements of city living. "It's very relaxing here."

THE KIDS, shown here biking in the terrace with dad, equate Bulacan with playtime, he says. "Here, they can run around freely, unlike in our city home where they are often cooped in the house."

THE TWO kids have become "addicted" to swimming, Cesar says.



DAD and the girls play in the kids' bedroom.



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7 INANG YAYA
8 REYNA
9 KAMASUTRA - 3
10 HUWAG KANG LILINGON

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) THE NATIVITY
2 (DOLBY) THE RETURN
3 (DOLBY) HAPPY FEET
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 SHAOLIN 2 VS. EVIL DEAD
2 TENACIOUS - D
3 MAKAMUNDO
4 THE RETURN
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 FLAG OF OUR FATHER
2 THE BANQUET
3 MAKAMUNDO
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 SHAOLIN 2 VS. EVIL DEAD
2 SPIRIT TRAP
3 KAMAZUTRA

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue
(Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 ANG PAMANA
2 PITONG DALAGITA

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 ZU WARRIOR
2 SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS
3 THE MARINE
4 INANG YAYA

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 THE MARINE
2 PITONG DALAGITA

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72
1 TENACIOUS D
2 HAPPY FEET
3 CASINO ROYAL
4 A GOOD YEAR

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 BOA
2 HAPPY FEET / DECK THE HALLS
3 FLAG OF OUR FATHER
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 HAPPY FEET
4 FLAG OF OUR FATHER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 BARANG
2 INANG YAYA
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 ANG PAMANA
2 THE RETURN
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
4 BORAT

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 HAPPY FEET
2 ANG PAMANA
FLAG OF OUR FATHER / THE MARINE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BOND
2 INANG YAYA

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 MAKAMUNDO
CASINO ROYAL 007 JAMES BAND

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
2 MAKAMUNDO
3 PARAISO SA GUBAT
4 THE COVENANT

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 BOA
2 DARK DANCERS
3 FLAG OF OUR FATHERS
4 MAKAMUNDO
5 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 MAKAMUNDO
2 HAPPY FEET
3 STEP UP
4 THE RETURN

Benna Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 MAKAMUNDO
2 SNAKE ON THE PLANE

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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CINEMA	Film	Times	Rating
1	SHAOLIN VS. EVIL DEAD	11:50, 2:10, 4:25 6:40, 9:00	PG-13
2	SPIRIT TRAP	11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:25, 10:25	R-13

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PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment™ for all!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA	Film	Times	Rating
3	DECK THE HALLS //THE NATIVITY	11:40, 1:50, 4:00, //6:00, 8:20, 10:35	PG13
4	TENACIOUS D	11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:20, 10:35	PG13
5	HAPPY FEET	11:00, 1:15, 3:35, 5:55, 8:15, 10:55	GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

DEC 16, 2006	Nyoy Volante	9:00 PM
DEC 28, 2006	Truefaith, Mojofly, Guji Florenza	8:30 PM

TEATRINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
DEC 13, 2006	CERRUDO CLASSICO	8:00 PM
	FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722-4532 LOC 116	

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

BEST FOREIGN FILM BUENOS AIRES ROJO SANGRE
SA ILALIM NG COGON

BEST FOREIGN FILM
2005 Buenos Aires Rojo Sangre
Yul Servo
Julia Clarete
a film by Rico Maria Ilarde
Showing at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD Cinema 3
DECEMBER 13 - 19
For inqbiries, call 632-9116 / 395-2188 locs 230/240. For block bookings, text 0917-8211093

JUDY Ann Santos and Ryan Agoncillo RYAN LIM

What's cooking?

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ACTRESS JUDY ANN SANTOS, WITH beau Ryan Agoncillo and friend Beth Tamayo, mounted "Cookie Jam," a cake and pastry auction in her own Café Carabana on two festive nights.

"We auctioned eight cakes, two carrot-banana breads and five muffin varieties. Bidding for the cakes started at P1,000; for the muffins (a box of 12), P500," Juday recalls.

On the first night, she sold a New York cheesecake worth P4,300. On the second auction, a Tableya cake, made from pure chocolate tablets, went for a record P13,000.

"The entrance ticket, which cost P300, came with a big chocolate chip cookie for free," she explains.

PARTY! PARTY!

As bonus, there were also performances from rock artists Maegan Aguilar, Radha Cuadrado and, naturally, Cookie Chua.

Juday supports two foundations: Touch a Heart (for kids and the elderly) and Lyrics and Sheet (for a leper colony), according to manager Alfie Lorenzo.

The auction, a fund-raiser, was clearly a labor of love.

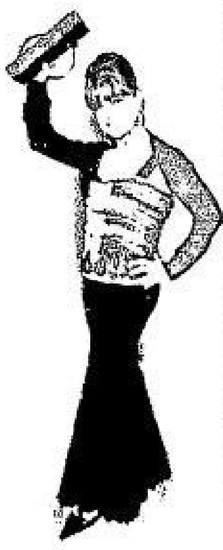
Aided by family and friends, she usually starts baking at 8 in the morning until a few minutes before the big event.

It can be nerve-wracking.

"But seeing the smiles of those who bought the cakes makes it all worthwhile. They are always surprised when I tell them that I baked the cakes myself," she quips.

Juday graduated from the Center for Asian Culinary Studies, under chef Gene Gonzales of Café Ysabel Greenhills, last Wednesday.

'Dreamgirls' LA premiere



PAULA Abdul REUTERS

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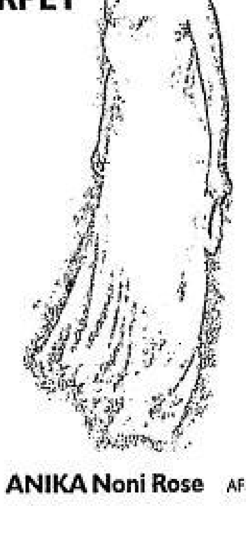
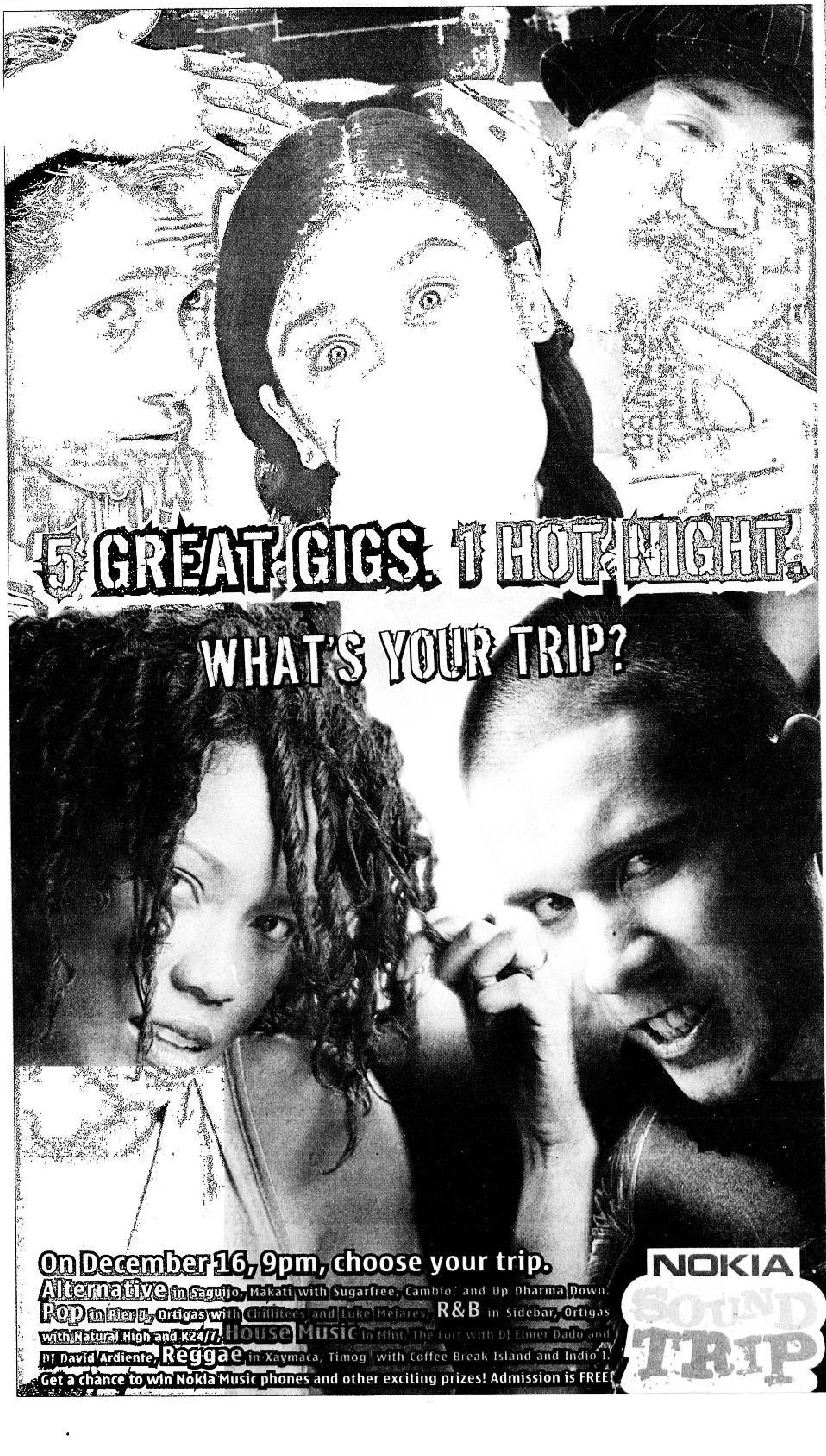


ANIKA Noni Rose AFP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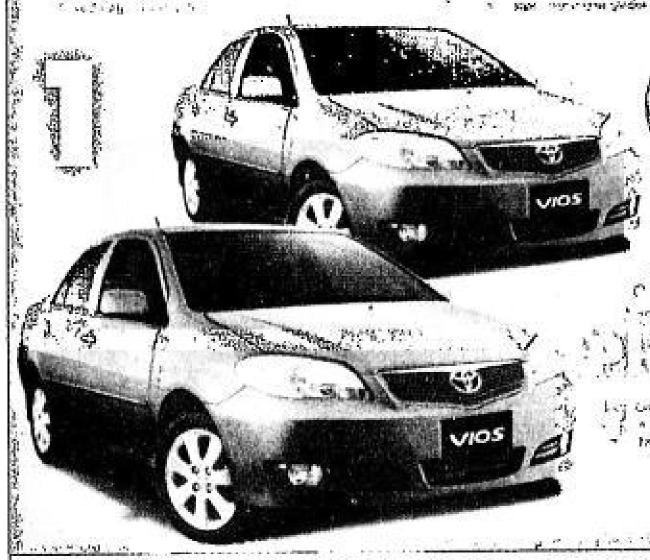
Get a chance to win Nokia Music phones and other exciting prizes! Admission is FREE!

ABENSON

1



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2

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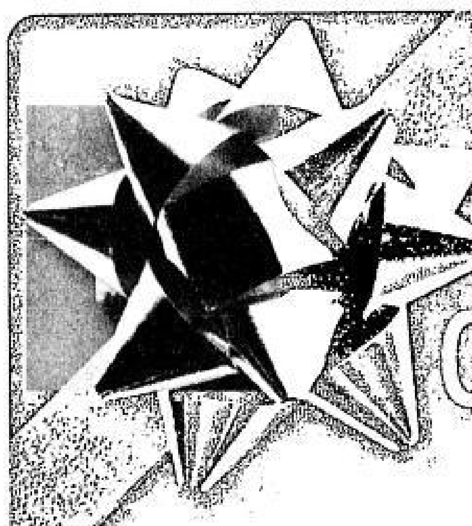

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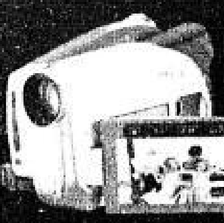

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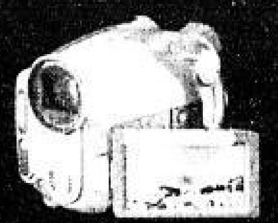
DC40



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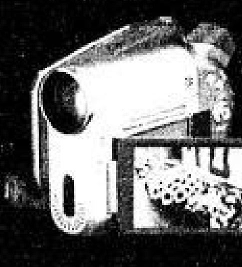

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680,000 pixels
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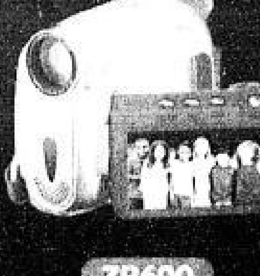

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4

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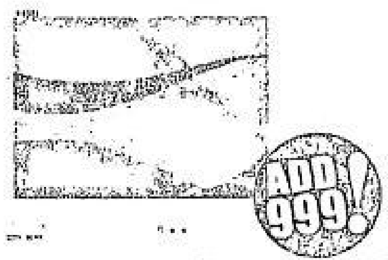

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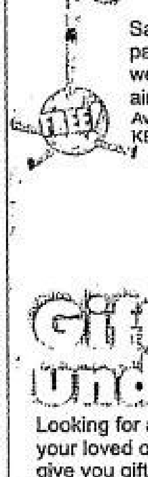

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10

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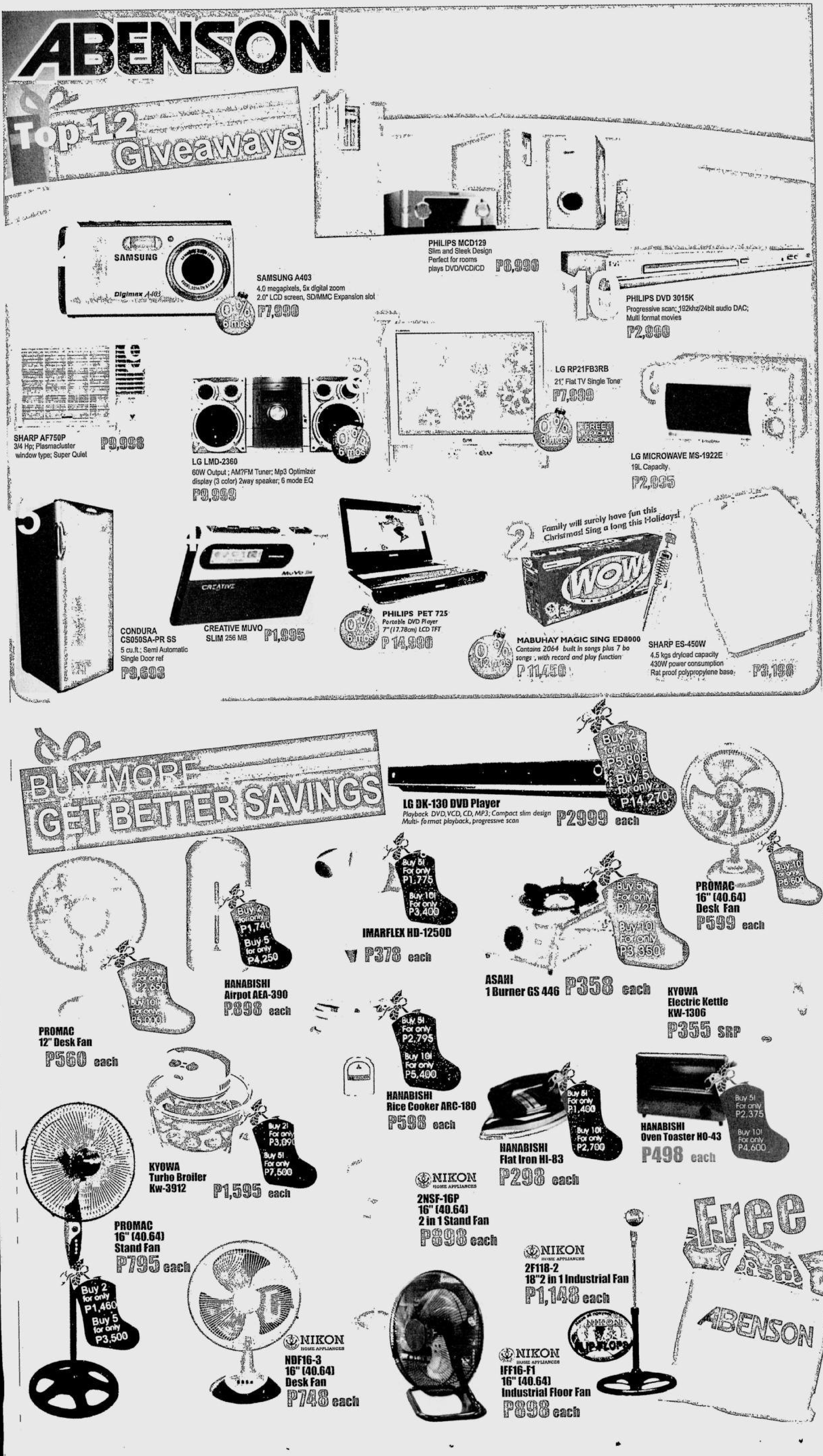
Undecided on what to give your loved ones this Christmas? We've taken out the worries in shopping, just get them an ABENSON GIFT CERTIFICATE. Gift Certificates are available in all Abenson stores, Visit us now!



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Family will surely have fun this Christmas! Sing a long this Holidays!

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4.5 kgs dryload capacity
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Playback DVD, VCD, CD, MP3; Compact slim design
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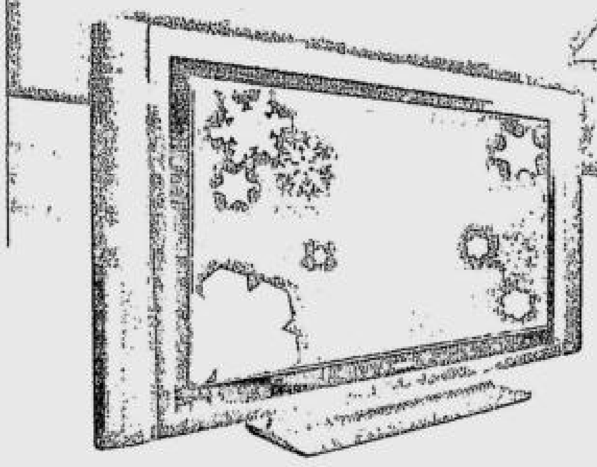

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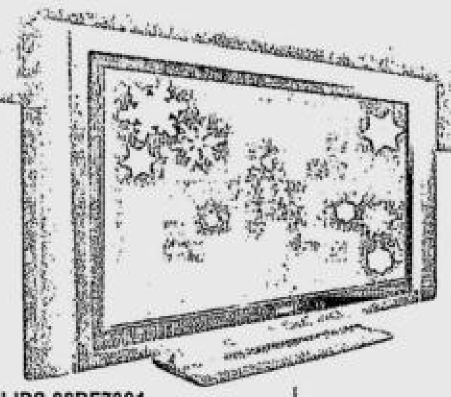

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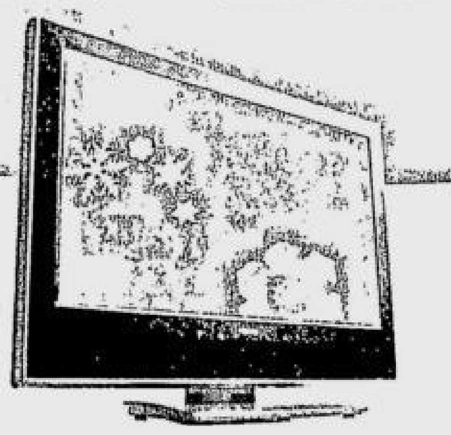

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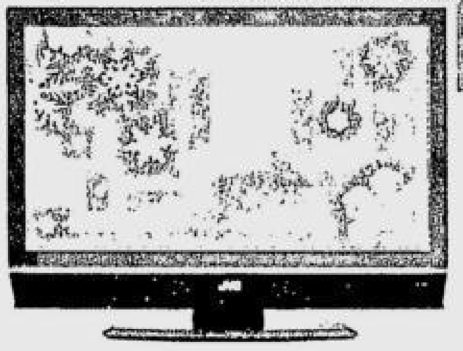

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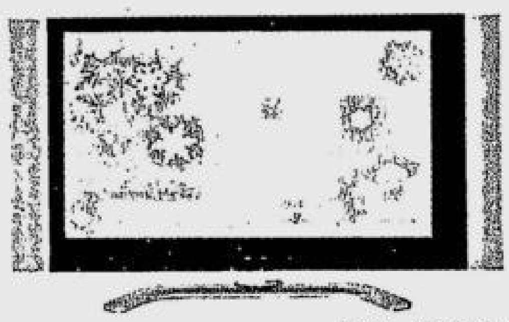

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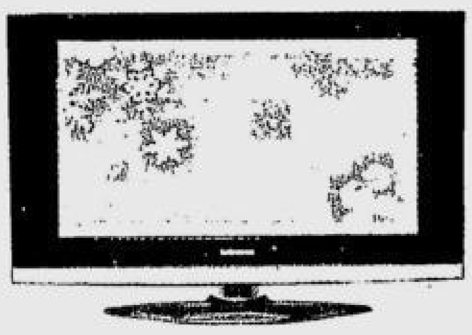

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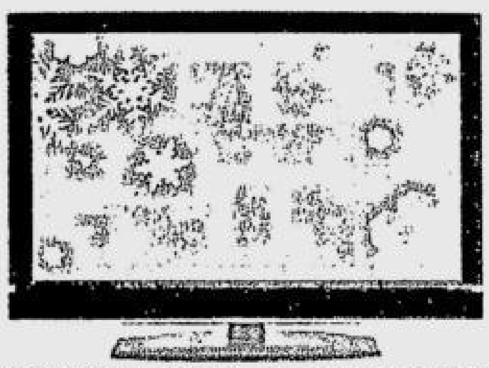

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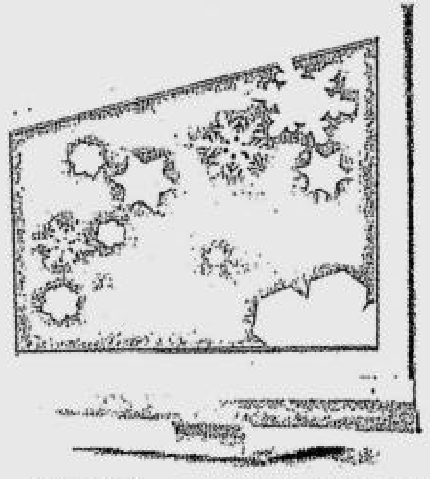

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32" LCD TV
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HDTV Ready

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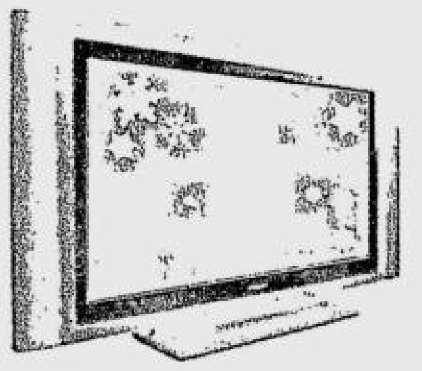

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42" LCD, WXGA LCD TV
High Definition TV
with Silver Casing Active Control Screen
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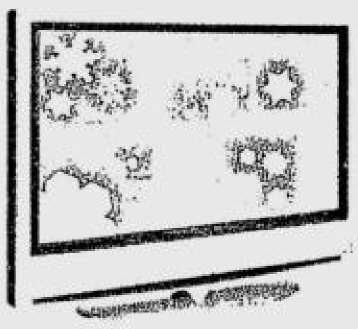

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46" LCD, high definition

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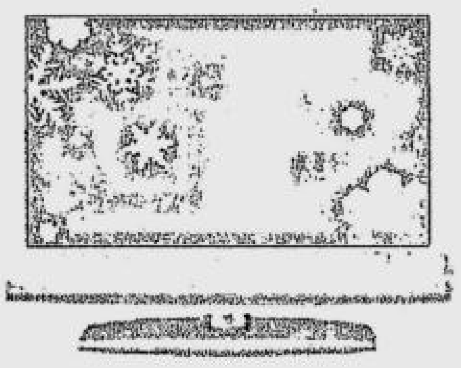
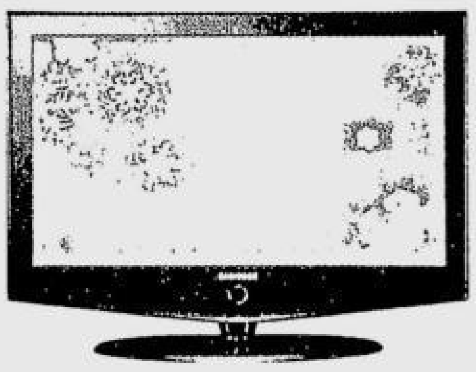


SONY 40S200A
40" LCD, high definition
1Mega Pixel WXGA (1366 x 768)
HD Ready, PC Input
Tru Surround XT Virtual Surround Tech.

P189,990



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DNiE advanced Bar type Speaker
SRS Tru Surround Speaker

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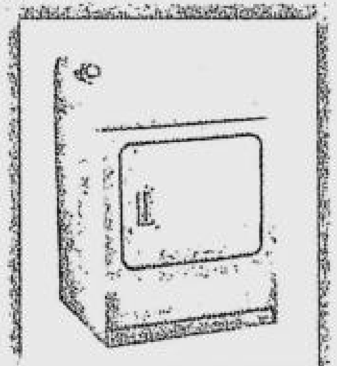
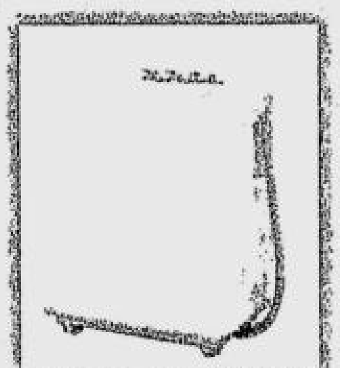
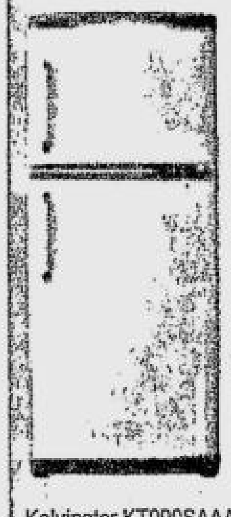
7.5kg, twin tub, air turbo drying system
9,298



Whirlpool 4PLEC8647
10.5 Dryer Electric
28,348



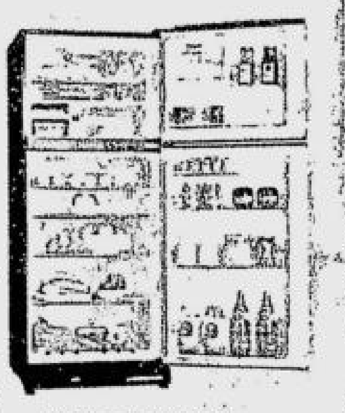
Panasonic NA-W43R6W
4.3kg Twin Tub dry weight capacity
6,199



Kelvinator KT090SAAAX
9.0 cu. ft. 2-door
semi-automatic Aluminox
16,498

0% 6mos.

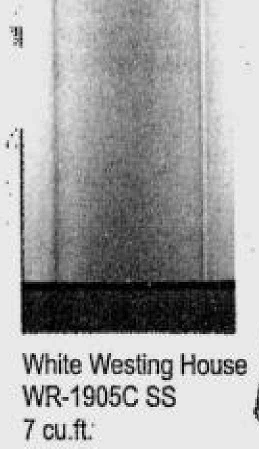
Condura
CT075 SA PR SS
7.5 cu. ft. Semi- Automatic
14,448



Whirlpool WSN11SS
2 door 10.5 cu. ft. no frost
26,798

Panasonic NR-A705EC
7 cubic feet
Semi-Automatic
10,499

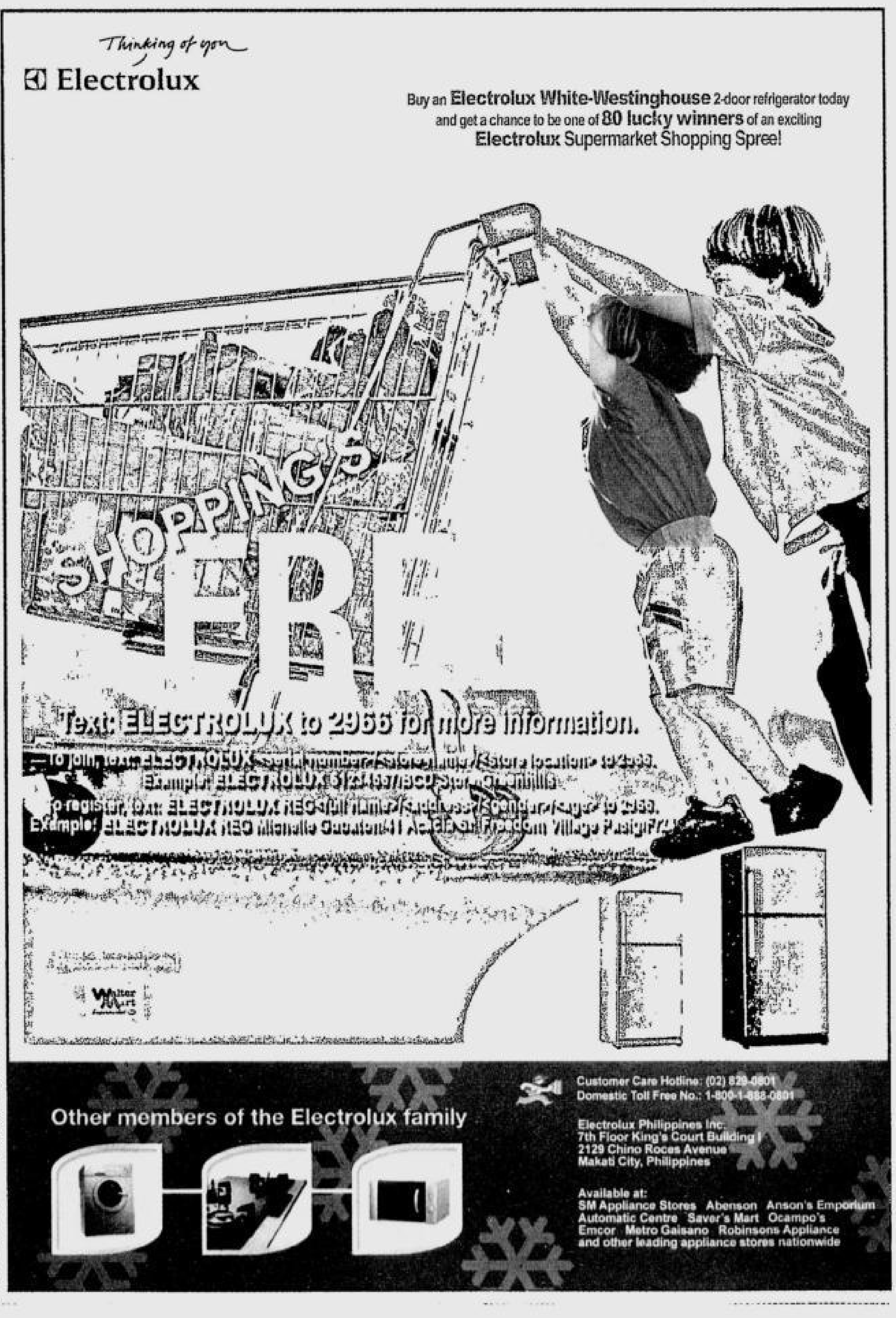
Samsung RA-20VHSS
7 cu. ft.
Direct Cool
11,348



White Westing House
WR-1905C SS
7 cu.ft.
13,298

FREE gas stove
on participating refrigerators

*0% applicable provided monthly bill is paid in full. Subject to bank's terms and conditions.
Subject to changes without prior notice.



Thinking of you
Electrolux

Buy an **Electrolux White-Westinghouse** 2-door refrigerator today and get a chance to be one of **80 lucky winners** of an exciting **Electrolux** Supermarket Shopping Spree!

Text: ELECTROLUX to 2966 for more information.
To join, text: ELECTROLUX [illegible] to 2966.
Example: ELECTROLUX [illegible]
To register, text: ELECTROLUX REG [illegible] to 2966.
Example: ELECTROLUX REG [illegible]

Other members of the Electrolux family

Customer Care Hotline: (02) 829-0801
Domestic Toll Free No.: 1-800-1-888-0801

Electrolux Philippines Inc.
7th Floor King's Court Building I
2129 Chino Roces Avenue
Makati City, Philippines

Available at:
SM Appliance Stores Abenson Anson's Emporium Automatic Centre Saver's Mart Ocampo's Emcor Metro Gaisano Robinsons Appliance and other leading appliance stores nationwide

ABENSON, now with the most Sony Digital Solutions Plaza

A Testament to ABENSON and SONY's commitment to make life easier.

This is the age high-tech gadgets and many people are constantly trying to find the fastest, smartest, or coolest technology to fit their needs and lifestyles. No need to look farther because the most complete range of audio-video products & mobile entertainment solutions are all under one roof.

Abenson, the country's leading appliance and consumer's product retailer, has now teamed up with Sony, the leading consumer electronics manufacturer, to provide more excitement and unmatched levels of customer satisfaction through the Digital Solutions Plaza (DSP). Currently with four locations (and more to open soon), Abenson has the most Sony DSP's in the country today.

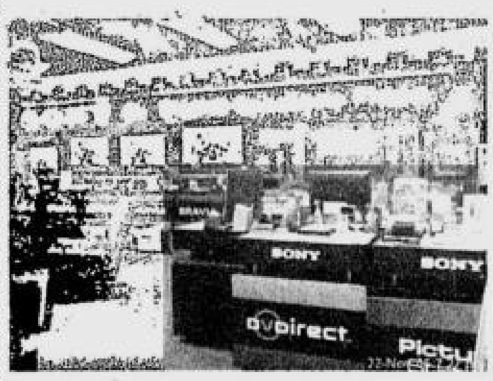
Enter the world of Abenson and discover from their well-trained product specialists how Sony Solutions offer smart combinations of superior connectivity among its products through complementing technologies. Unveil how a picture taken from a Sony Cyber-Shot and footage from a HDD Handycam can be viewed on a Sony LCD Bravia through USB or AV cable. The Sony AZ Series Hi-Fi Components can also playback downloaded music from computers; and a Sony PSP or walkman phone can be attached to the Xplod Car Audio through USB connectivity. Explore more of the latest Sony products and solutions at the Abenson nearest you and [illegible] possibilities that Sony has to offer.

Visit a Sony Digital Solutions Plaza at Abenson [illegible]

ABENSON

SONY like.no.other™

BRAVIA



ABENSON [illegible]

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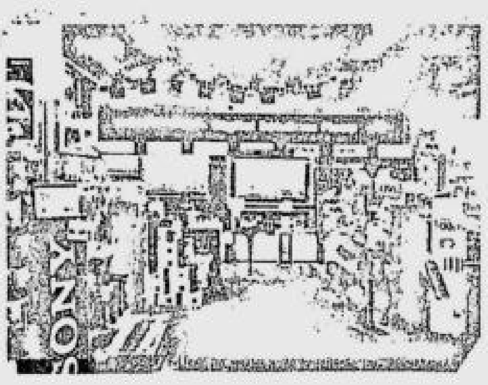

ABENSO

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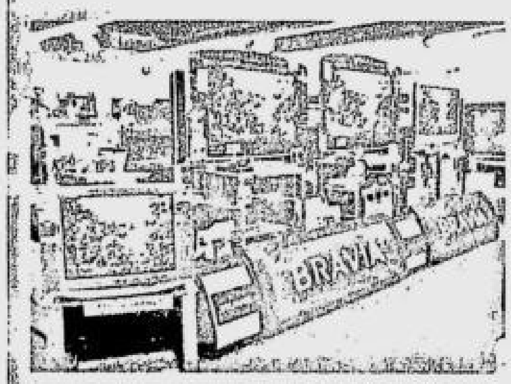
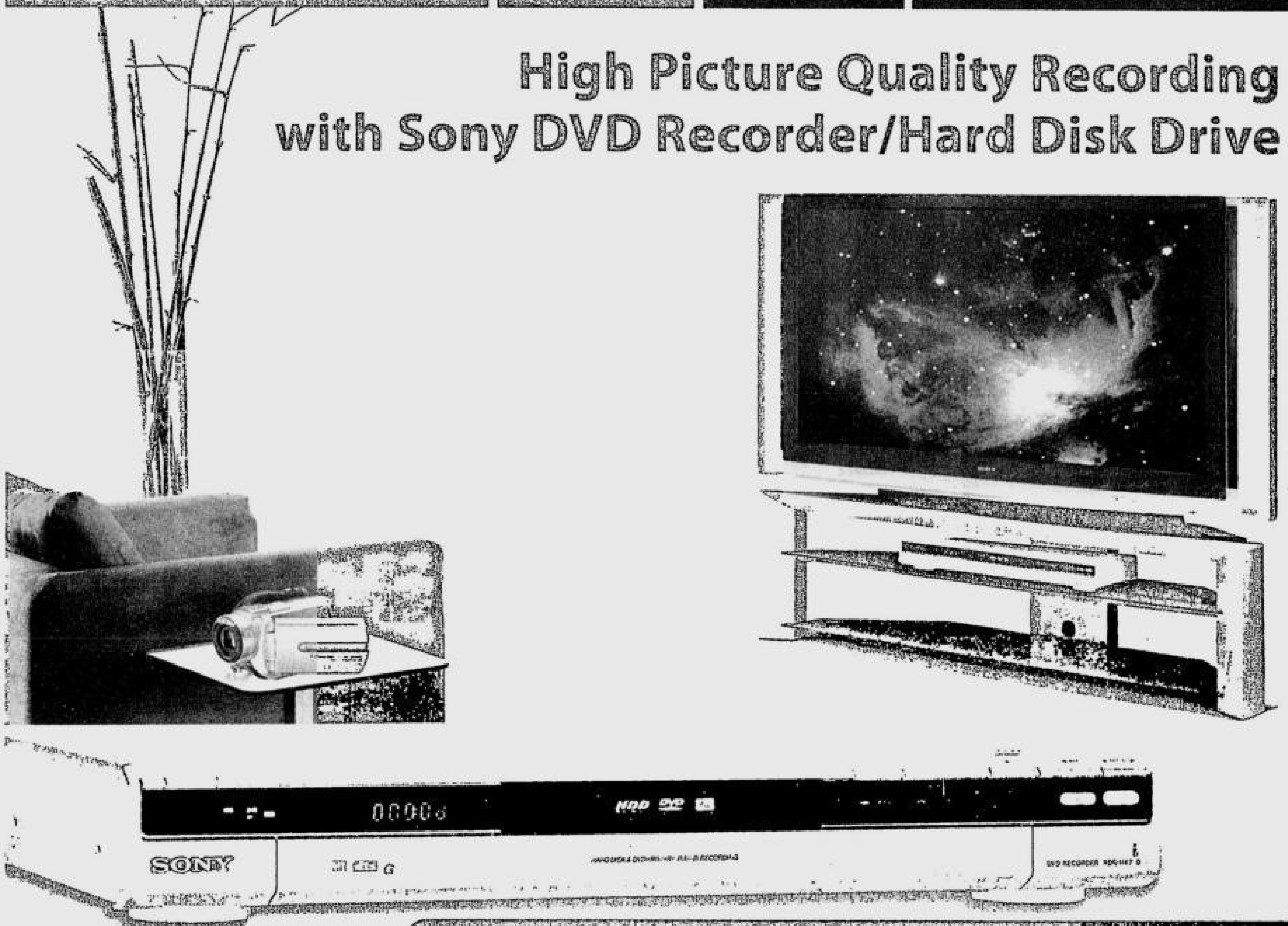


ABENSON
Sta. Lucia Mall
Second [illegible]
Grand Mall, [illegible]
Marcos Highway, [illegible]
681-[illegible]530

ABENSON
Waltermart Makati
790 A. Arnaiz Ave. cor.
Pasong Tamo Makati City
812-2882

SOONTO OPEN!!!
ABENSON
Dasmariñas

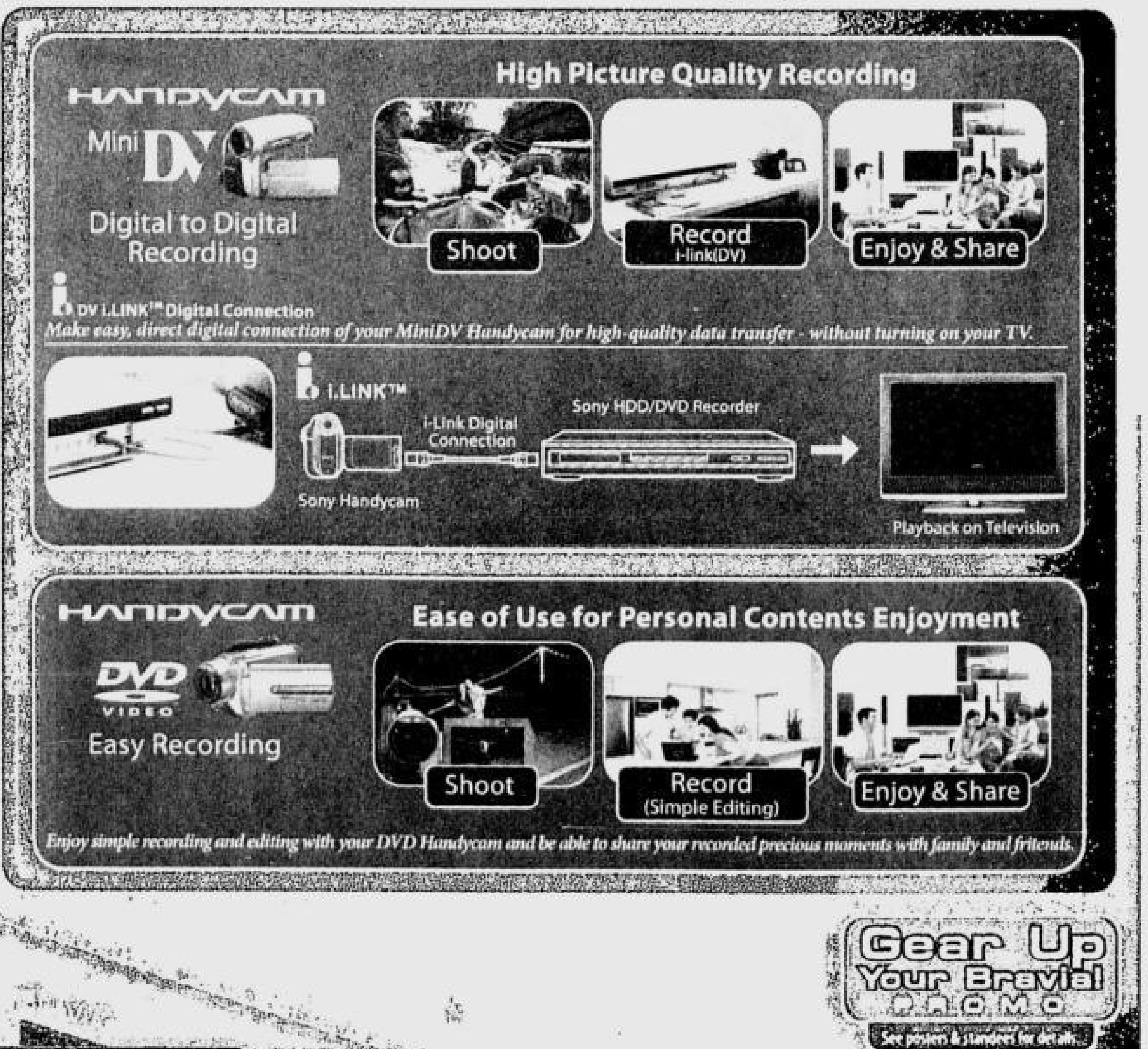
High Picture Quality Recording with Sony DVD Recorder/Hard Disk Drive



SONY
HDD DVD

RDR - HX730 P36,999

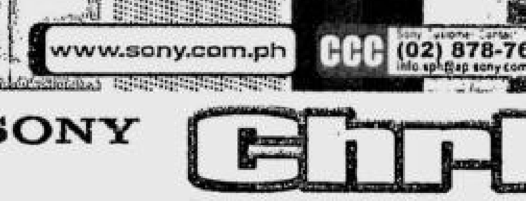
- Hard Disk Drive (HDD) 160GB
- i.LINK (DV) Port for Camcorder (with One Touch Dubbing)
- Dual RW/R & +R Double Layer (8.5GB Disc) Recording & Playback
- DVD RAM Playback
- DivX Playback (DVD, CD-R/RW)
- MP3 & JPEG Playback (CD-R/RW), S-VCD/VCD Playback
- High Bit Rate Recording Mode on HDD (XP+)
- Precision Cinema Progressive & 12bit/108MHz Video DAC
- Chasing Playback, Simultaneous Recording and Playback (HDD/VR mode)
- High Quality Recording in 3hr Mode (500 lines of Horizontal Resolution)



HANDYCAM
Mini DV
Digital to Digital Recording
High Picture Quality Recording
Shoot
Record i-link(DV)
Enjoy & Share
DV i.LINK™ Digital Connection
i.LINK™
Sony HDD/DVD Recorder
i-Link Digital Connection
Sony Handycam
Playback on Television
HANDYCAM
DVD VIDEO
Easy Recording
Ease of Use for Personal Contents Enjoyment
Shoot
Record (Simple Editing)
Enjoy & Share

Make easy, direct digital connection of your MiniDV Handycam for high-quality data transfer - without turning on your TV.

Enjoy simple recording and editing with your DVD Handycam and be able to share your recorded precious moments with family and fritends.



Gear Up Your Bravia! PROMO
See posters & standees for details.

www.sony.com.ph
CCC Sony Customer Contact Center (02) 878-7600 info.sph@ap.sony.com
via SMS: text inquirer space your question and send to 0917-8077669

SONY **Christmas Treasures 2006** like.no.other™

Promo period: November 10, 2006 to January 15, 2007

Catch our Christmas Treasures Exhibits at:

[illegible]

Per DTI NCR Permit [illegible]

ABENSON

SHARP 21V-R7OM
21" Universal Plus Function
Personal Preference EZ set-up
P 6,998
Free TV Rack
Free Coffee Maker

JVC AV-21BA16
21" Flat Screen TV, AV Stereo, 14 W
Total RMS Output, Cinema Turbo, Sound Mode with 5-band
P9,990
0% 12 mos.

SHARP 21V-FR80M
21"Flat Screen
Mono Sound 181 Channel Cable Compatible Tuner
P 8,998
Free TV Rack
Free Coffee Maker
ADD 298 MP3 Player
0% 6 mos.

PANASONIC TC-21FX10P
21" Flat Covered TV / Mono Sound
Wing-Type Stereo, 2 speaker
P 8,999
Free TV Rack
Free Coffee Maker
0% 6 mos.

PANASONIC TC-21FX20P
21" Flat Covered TV / Stereo Sound
AV Stereo
P 9,499
Free TV Rack
0% 6 mos.

Panasonic
TC-29FX20P
Twin Digital Combo Filter
Picture Noise Reduction
AV Stereo
P23,999
Free TV Rack
0% 12 mos.

JVC AV29MT35
XV-N412S
29" Flat Screen
MTS Stereo w/ Sub Woofer
with TV RACK
DVD: Component Input
AV Multi System
P32,980
Buy in Bundles!
0% 12 mos.

Samsung CT-29K40
29" Flat TV Screen DNR (Digital Noise Reduction)
Color Tone Control, MTS Stereo Turbo Plus Sound
P 20,648
Free TV Rack
Free Coffee Maker
ADD 2,990 DVD 260K for Cash Basis
0% 12 mos.

Philips 21PT5006
21" Smart Picture Control, DVD input
AV Stero and personal Zapping
P11,398
Free TV Rack
ADD P1,995 to avail of DVP 3020
0% 12 mos.

Sony KVSZ29N50
29" Flat TV, Intelligent Picture Plus
Intelligent Picture Signal Indicator,
DVD Component Input
5 Band Graphic Equalizer,
P26,990
ADD P500 to avail of a TV Rack
ADD P999 to avail of a DVD player
0% 12 mos.

JVC AV29VA15
29" Flat Screen, colored TV
DVD menu set-up Cinema surround
DVD Component Input
P24,990
Free TV Rack
Free Coffee Maker
0% 12 mos.

Para Sigurado,
mag-ABENSON

SAMSUNG WS-32Z40HN
32" HD Ready DNLE
1080i 50Hz / 60HZ
SRS Tru Surround
P49,995
Free TV Rack
Free Coffee Maker
ADD P5,000 HT-P20 for Cash Basis

XENON AX512
2.1 Speaker System
Including Sub Woofer
and speakers
P2,990
0% 3 mos.

Pioneer EV-7
RMS 100W, 5 functions
DVD/DECK/Tuner/USB/Line)
Progressive Scan (PAL/NTSC)
P23,698
0% 6 mos.

Pioneer GX-3
2500 watts Multiple
Playback formats
Full Karaoke Entertainment
large speakers
P13,398
0% 6 mos.

JVC MX-DK1
DVD component
system,
Karaoke, 2000W
P12,990
0% 12 mos.

CAMERAS & GADGETS

Sony DSC-W30
6.1 Mega pixels, Carl Zeiss lens, 2" LCD
3x Optical zoom, 32MB internal memory
P17,999
Free P1,000 GC on accessories
Free P5,000 GC on Photo Printers
0% 24 mos.

Sony DSC-W50
6.1 Mega pixels, 32 MB internal memory,
2 5" LCD screen, Carl Zeiss Vario-Tesser lens
P20,999
Free P1,000 GC on accessories
Free P5,000 GC on Photo Printers
0% 24 mos.

Olympus MJU720W
7.1 Mega pixels, 3x Optical zoom,
2.5" LCD, 24 scene modes
movie recording, weatherproof metal body
P24,995
0% 12 mos.

Olympus FE-190
6 Mega pixels, Sensor resolution,
optical sensor type CCD,
digital zoom 4x shooting mode g\frame novie mouse
P14,995
0% 12 mos.

Sony DCR HC36
1/6" Advanced HAD CCD Imager,
680K Pixels Gross MiniDV Recording
20x Optical/ 8--x Digital zoom
P26,999
Free P1,000 GC on accessories
Free P5,000 GC on Photo Printers
0% 12 mos.

JVCGR-D370
1/6-inc 800k pixel CCD,
slim and stylish DVC, 32x optical zoom
16·9 wide screen, mode and digital still function
P27,990
0% 12 mos.

JVC MG-30
1/6-inch 680,000 pixel CCD,
25x Optical Zoom, 800x Digital Zoom
112k-pixel 2.5-inch amorphous silicon color LCD
High Quality MPPEG-2 Video Recording
P44,990
ADD P990 for a 21" TV
0% 18 mos.

APPLE iPod Video 30GB
30 GB, 2.5 LCD screen size,
320 X 240 pixels, AV composite
headphone out,
alarm anti-shock memory
P16,190
0% 6 mos.

JVC GR-D350
1/6" with 800 pixels,
32x optical zoom/ 800x digital zoom
520 lines resolution, colour viewfinder
P21,990
0% 12 mos.

Nokia N73
3.15MP, VGA video call camera,
Symbian S60 3rd Edition
42MB internal memory,
mini SD card external memory
P27,995
0% 12 mos.

Motorola K1
96 X 80 pixels,
20 MB internal memory
2MP, 1600 X 1200 pixels
video CIF
P25,500
0% 12 mos.

Nokia
5300
1.3MP, 240 x 320 pixels, video,
256K colors 7MB internal memory,
built-in Mini USB port 2.0
P16,295
0% 12 mos.

*0% applicable provided monthly bill is paid in full. Subject to bank's terms and conditions. Subject to changes without prior notice.

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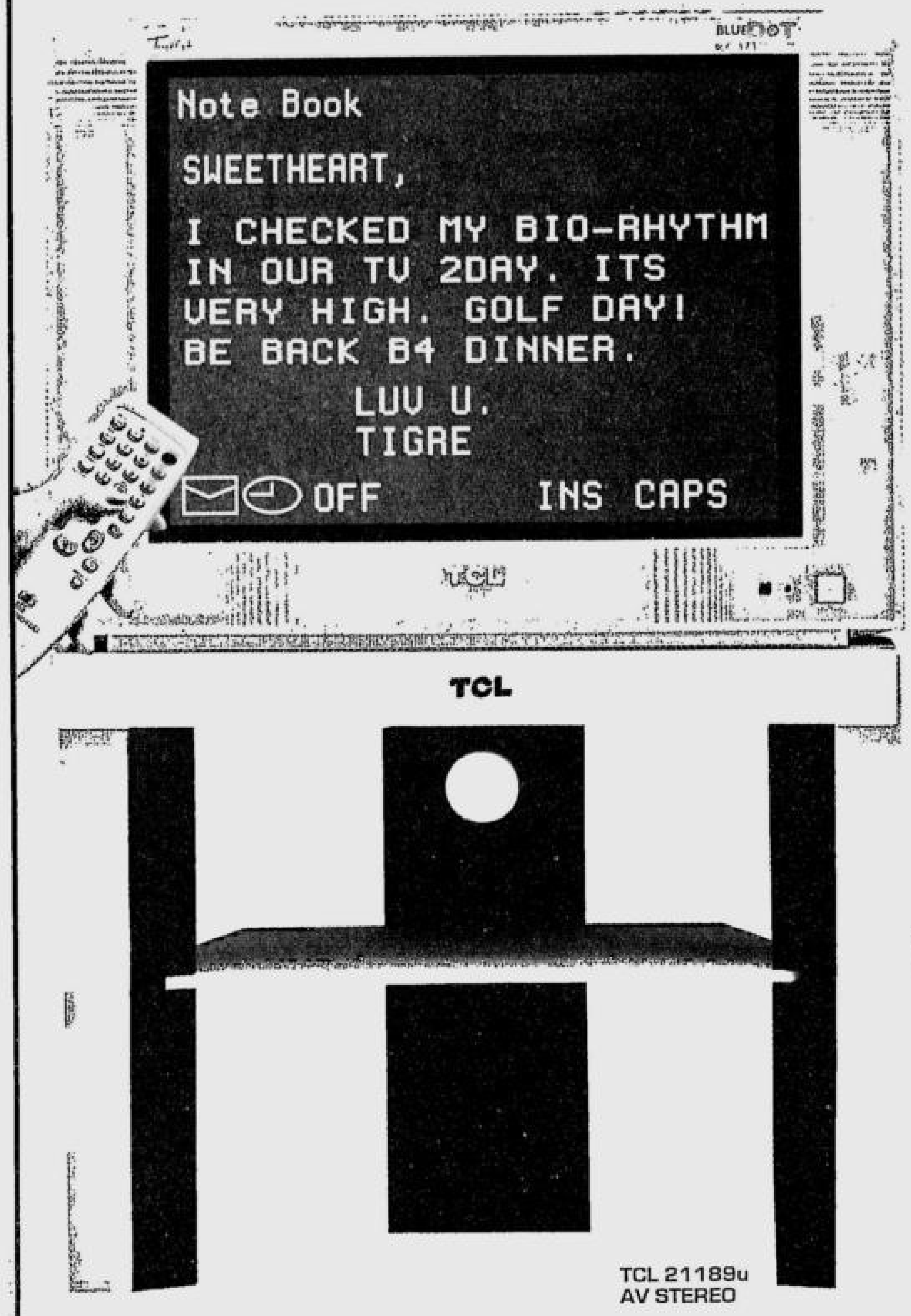


Note Book

SWEETHEART,

I CHECKED MY BIO-RHYTHM IN OUR TV 2DAY. ITS VERY HIGH. GOLF DAY! BE BACK B4 DINNER.

LUV U.
TIGRE

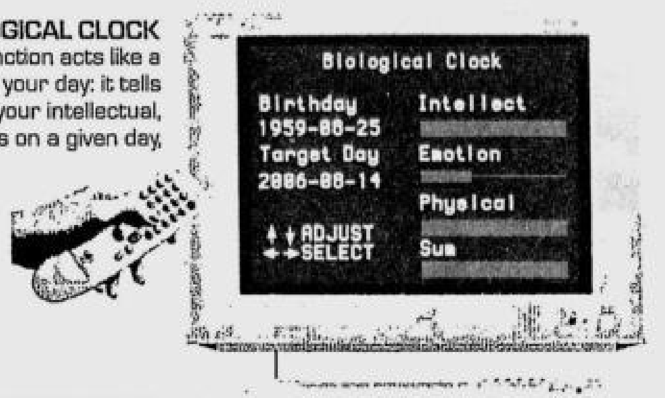
TCL 21189u
AV STEREO

All TCL FLAT CTVs come with rack accessory.

⑤ AMAZING FEATURES

① DAILY BIO-RHYTHM/BIOLOGICAL CLOCK

Based on your birthday, this function acts like a Feng Shui adviser for planning your day: it tells you the highs and lows of your intellectual, emotional and physical faculties on a given day, helping you decide to carry out activities that best fit your bio-rhythm and avoid those that do not. IDEAL FOR BUSINESS PEOPLE AND SPORTS ENTHUSIASTS (golfers and athletes).



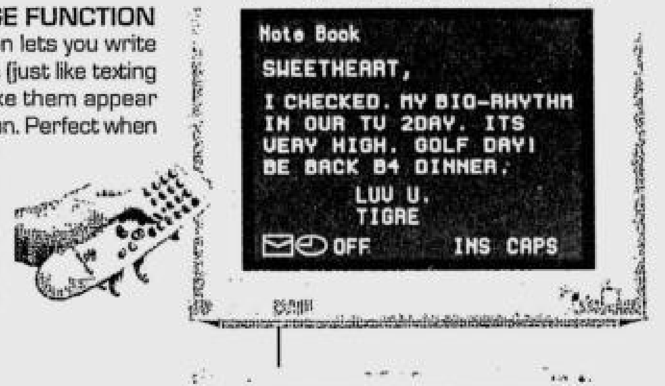
Biological Clock

Birthday 1959-08-25

Target Day 2006-08-14

② MESSAGE FUNCTION

This very useful function lets you write messages with your remote (just like texting from a cellphone) and make them appear as soon as the TV is turned on. Perfect when you want to inform your better half that you'll be home late, or tell your kids to finish their homework, or remind the helper to do the house chores.



Note Book

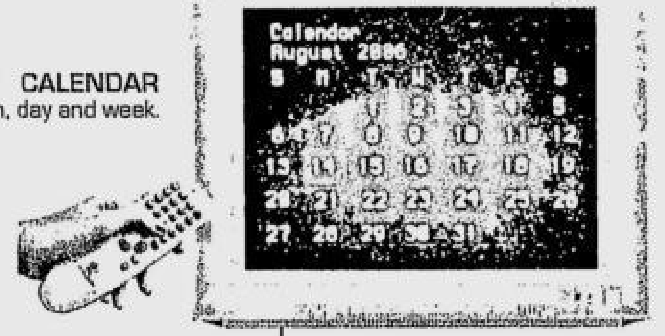
SWEETHEART,

I CHECKED. MY BIO-RHYTHM IN OUR TV 2DAY. ITS VERY HIGH. GOLF DAY! BE BACK B4 DINNER.

LUV U.
TIGRE

③ CALENDAR

Displays grid by month, day and week.



④ AV/MTS STEREO

Unlike mono TVs, all TCL TVs create 2-channel STEREO sound that's compatible to the source, allowing you to fully enjoy the stereo sound features of your VCD/DVD material (AV) and stereo broadcast (MTS) for big size models.

SOURCE	TV	RESULT
VCD/DVD STEREO	MONO TV	MONO SOUND
VCD/DVD STEREO	TCL AV/MTS STEREO	STEREO SOUND

⑤ DIGITAL CURTAIN

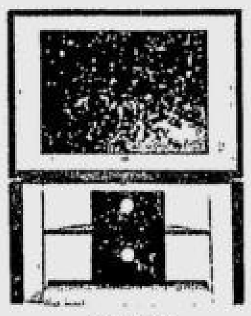
When the TV is turned on, the cool blue screen opens up much like the curtains of a movie screen, simulating the cinema experience.

TCL TVs. MORE AMAZING FEATURES THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE.

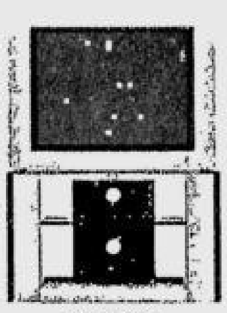
RCA in the US, Thomson in Europe, TCL in Asia.

Try to find other brands that offer such unique features, and you might just find yourself coming back to a TCL TV.

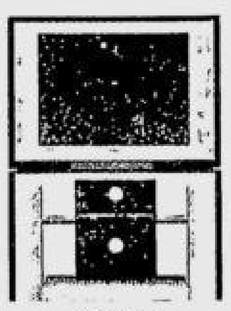
Surprisingly affordable, all TCL TVs also come with a 2-year parts and service warranty. Discover why people all over the world are starting to call TCL their "new favorite TV". Check out TCL today!



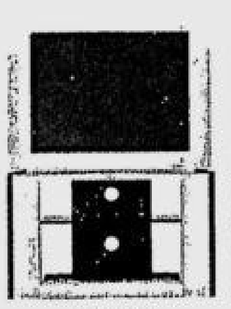
TCL 34181u
AV/MTS STEREO CTV



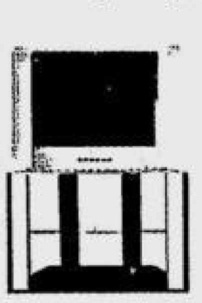
TCL 29189u
AV/MTS STEREO CTV



TCL 29181u
AV/MTS STEREO CTV



TCL 25189u
AV/MTS STEREO CTV



TCL 21E20
SLIM FLAT AV STEREO CTV

All TCL CTVs have all 5 AMAZING Features.

TCL

My New Favourite

Gear up this Holiday Season with World's Lightest DVD Camcorder With Dual Layer Recording

Weighing in at a mere 410 grams, the new Canon DC22 is the world's lightest 2-megapixel DVD camcorder and the latest addition to Canon's [illegible] ghosting. The DC22 [illegible] footage with the Electronic Image Stabilizer (EIS) [illegible] DIGIC DV [illegible]

[illegible] Recording. Simply put, Dual Layer Recording [illegible] recordable DVD. [illegible] DVD [illegible] recording on DVD-R DL discs. With DL technology, [illegible] DVD players, DVD recorders and computer DVD-ROM drives, making [illegible] playback a breeze.

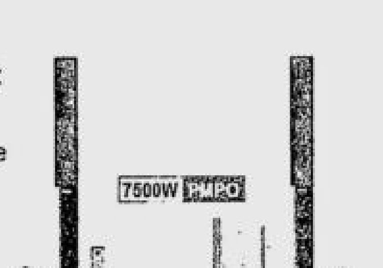
The Canon DC22 [illegible] technological triumph that combines superb performance with stylish design. As the world's lightest DVD camcorder, the DC22 is designed to fit snugly in the hand, allowing for single-handed operation further aided by thoughtfully laid-out controls. Quick single-action switching between Record and Playback is made possible with the Return Switch, while its joystick operation allows fast, easy access to camcorder functions. [illegible] capture your [illegible] perfectly [illegible] device. With the DC22 shooting the highest resolution DVD's and watching them at home at the end of the day [illegible] holiday season [illegible]

XPERIENCE THRILL

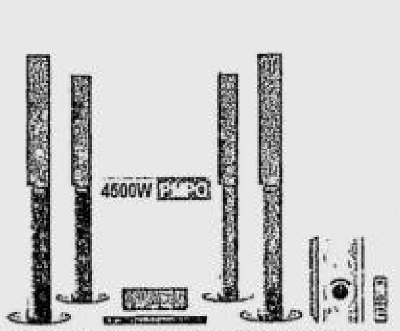
HTZ656DVD
5.1 Channel Speaker
DVD Home Theater System

- HDMI digital interface
- USB terminal
- Photo + Music Mix
- GigaByte Music (DVD data disc playback)
- Progressive Scan (PAL/NTSC)
- 4 tallboy speakers, center speaker and subwoofer
- "Down-firing" Subwoofer
- Multi-Channel Acoustic Calibration System (MCACC)
- DVD / SVCD / VCD / CD / WMA / MP3 / MPEG-4 AAC / JPEG player, DivX, DTS / Dolby Digital / Dolby Pro Logic II

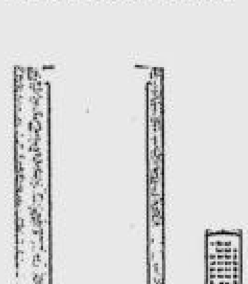
Sit back, relax and enjoy an ultimate Saturday night viewing in a surround sound listening environment with Pioneer Home Theater System. Experience the finest picture and sound quality through Pioneer technology.

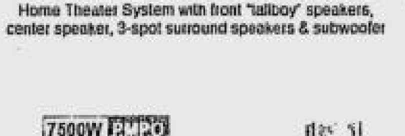


HTZ555DVD
Home Theater System with front "tallboy" speakers, center speaker, 3-spot surround speakers & subwoofer

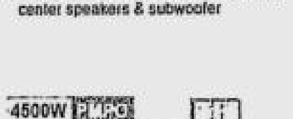


HTZ252DVD
Home Theater System with 4 "tallboy" speakers, center speakers & subwoofer





HTZ353DVD
5-Speaker System with 3-spot front surround speakers, center speaker & subwoofer

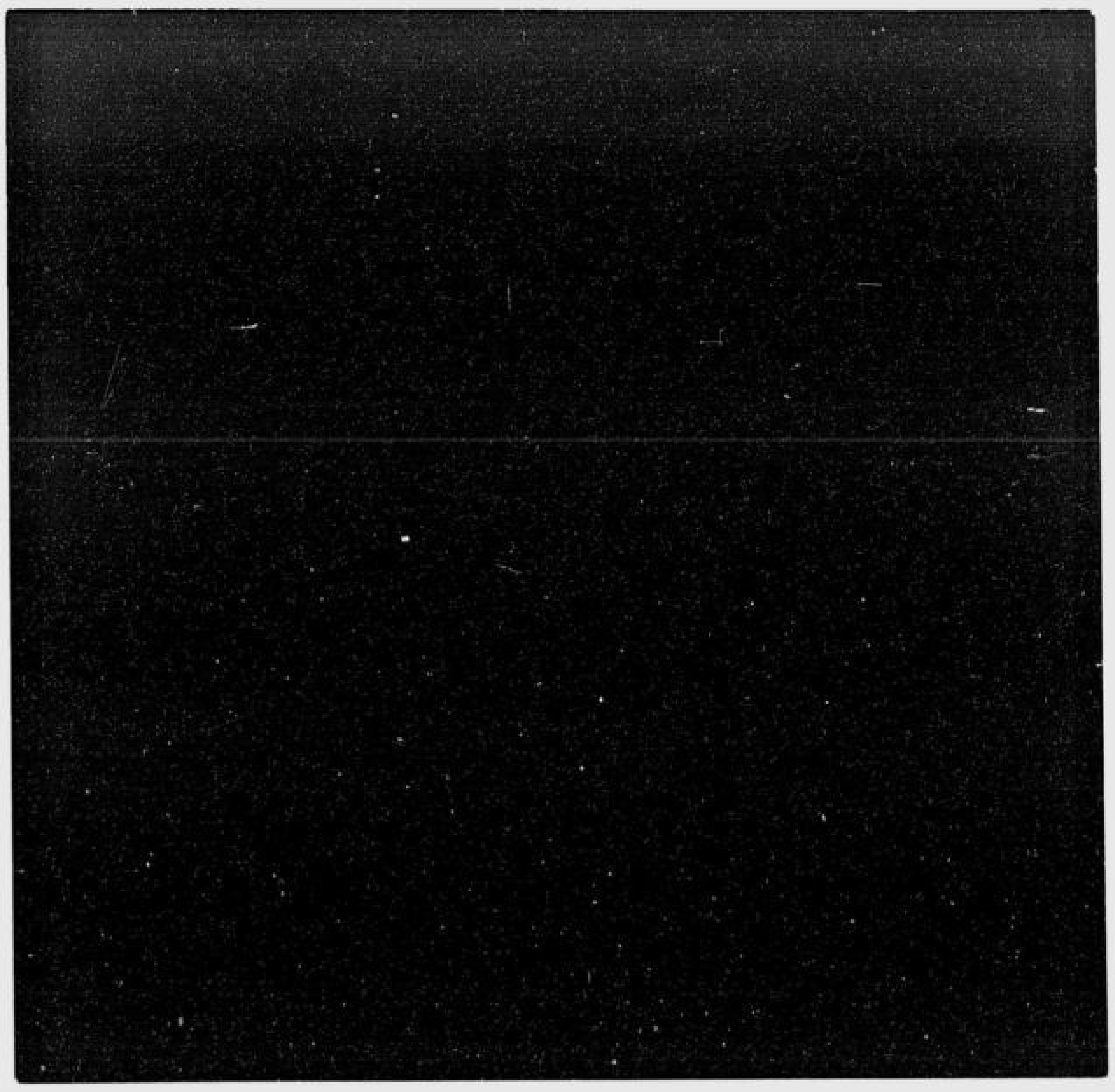


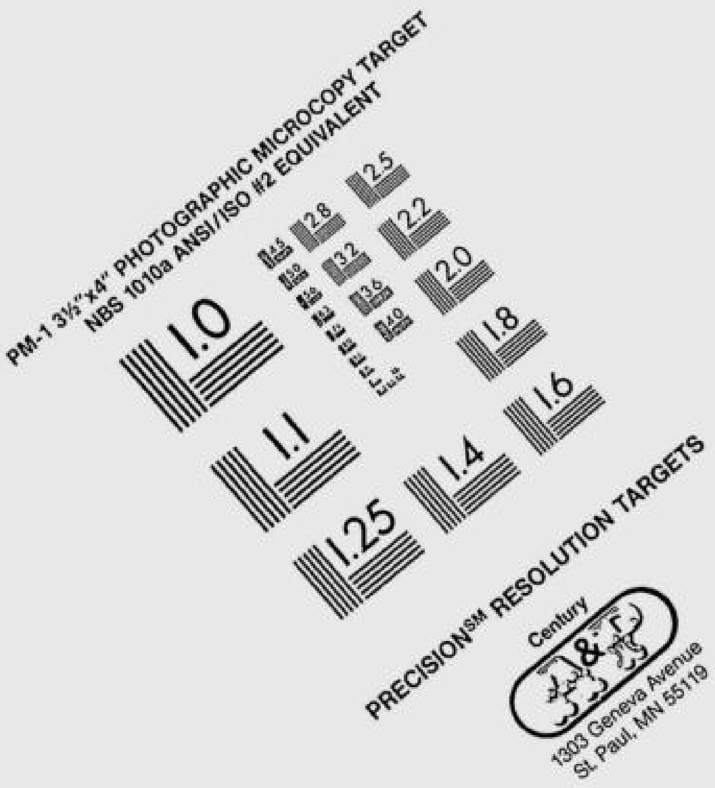
HTZ161DVD
5-Speaker System with 3-spot front surround speaker layout with center speaker & subwoofer

Pioneer *sound.vision.soul*

Available at leading appliance stores nationwide.

http://www.pioneer.com.sg

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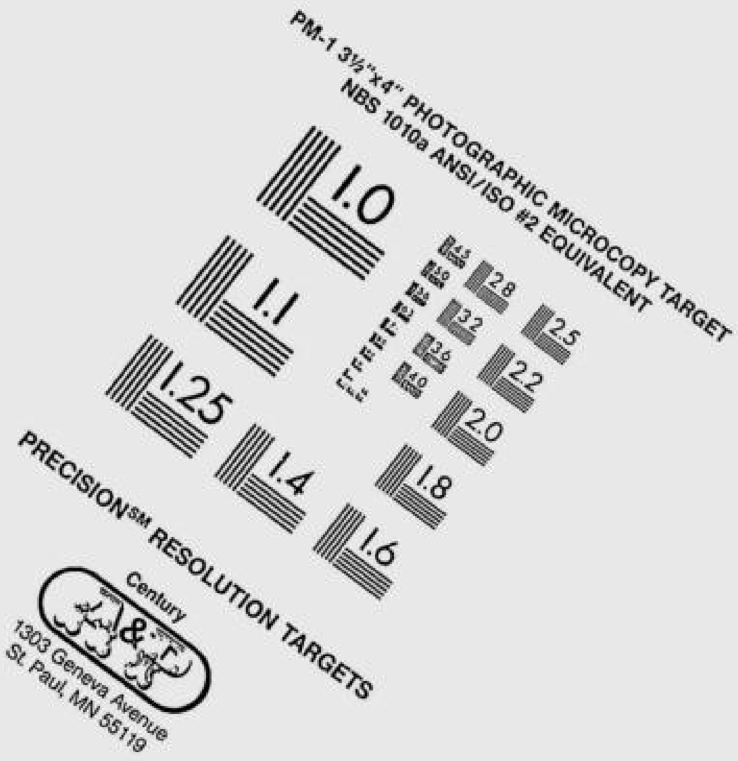
PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS
Century
1303 Geneva Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55119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PRECISIONSM RESOLUTION TARGETS
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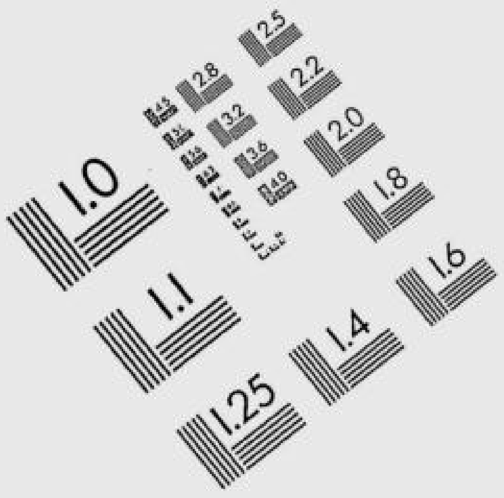
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)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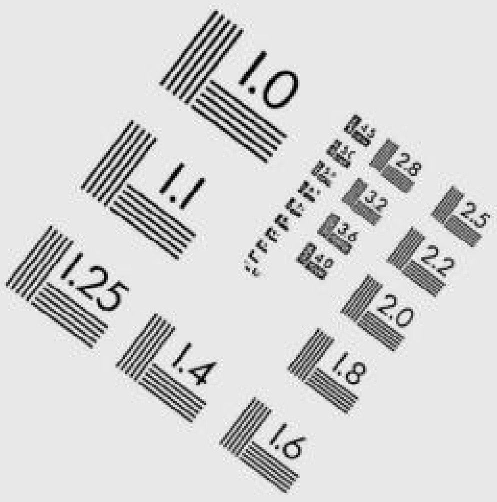
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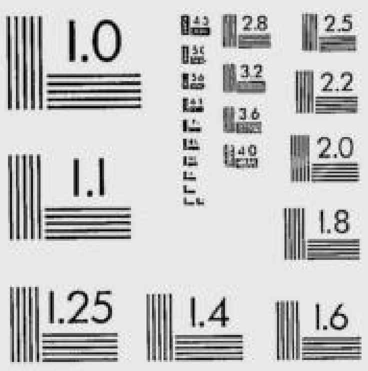
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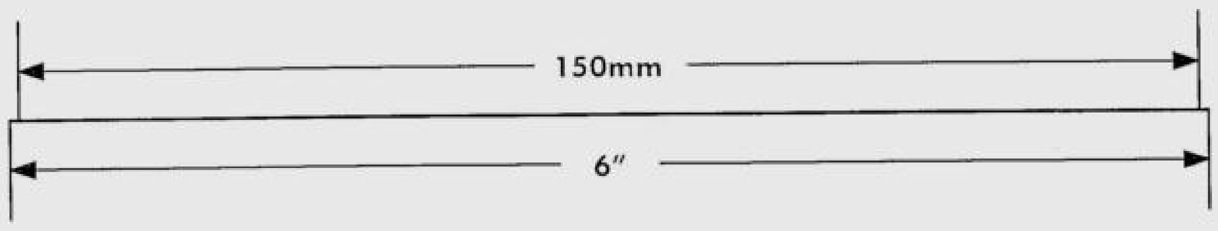

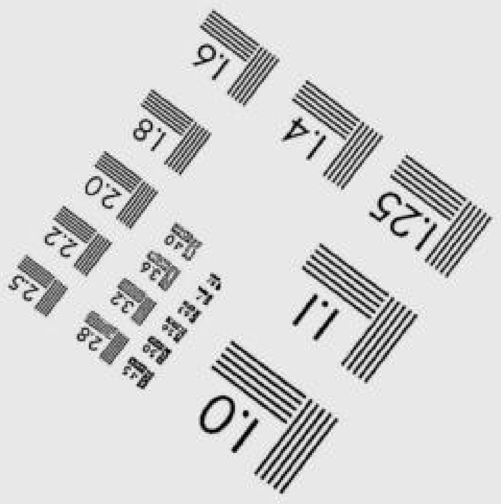
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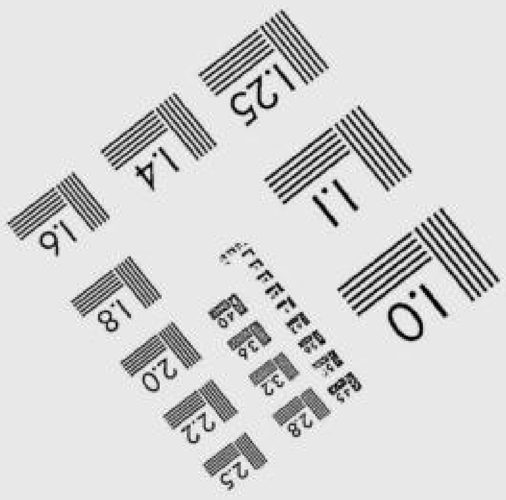
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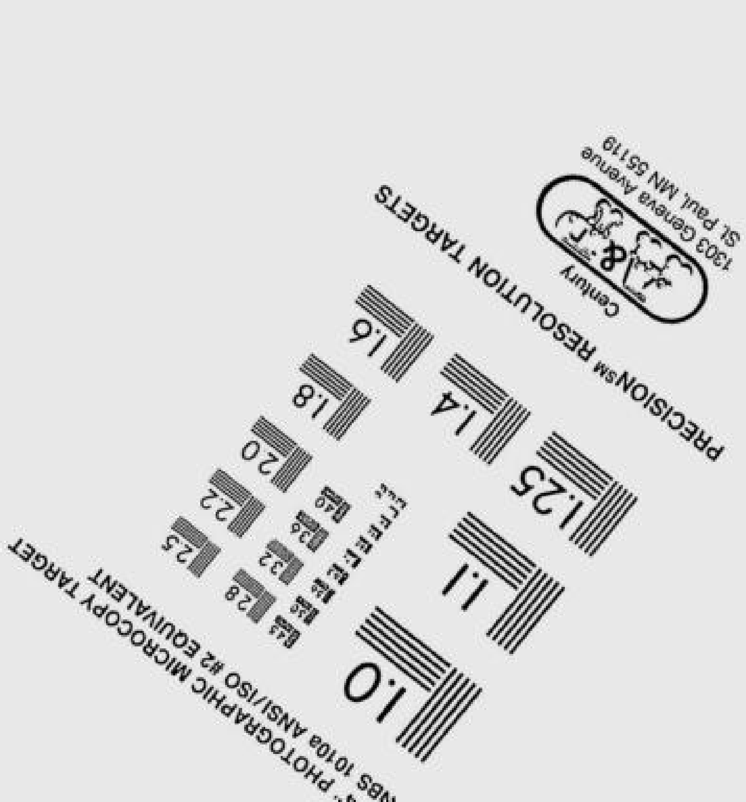
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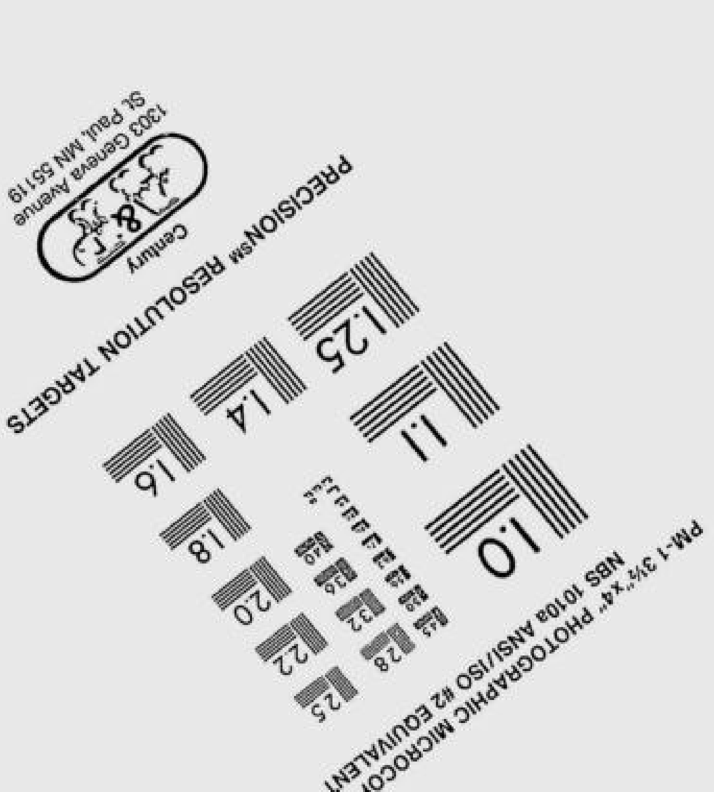
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

DECEMBER
1 THRU 15
2006

REEL 394

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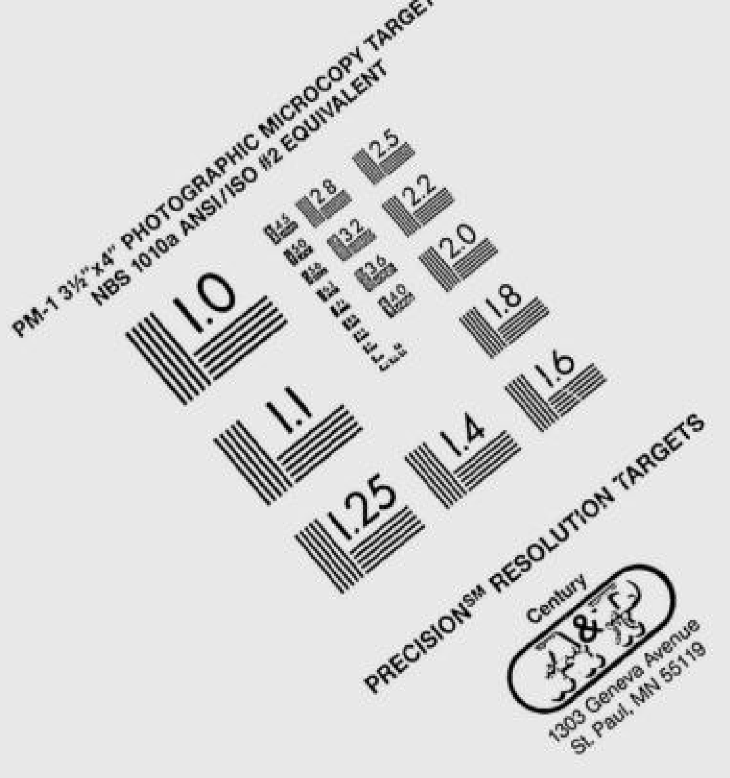
DECEMBER
16 THRU 31
2006

REEL 395



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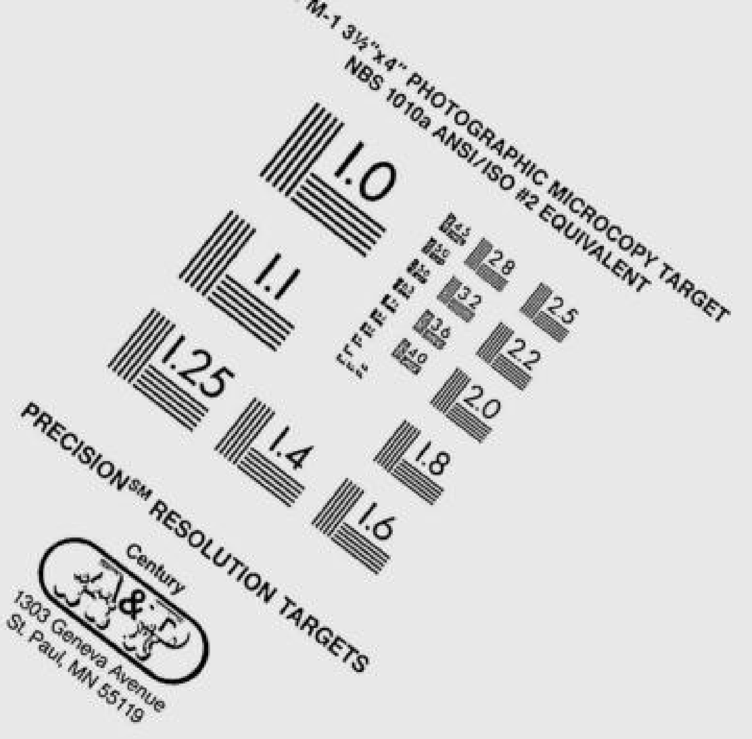

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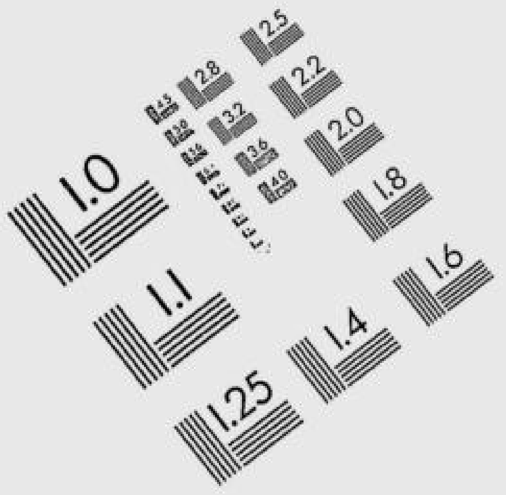
IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (MT-3)



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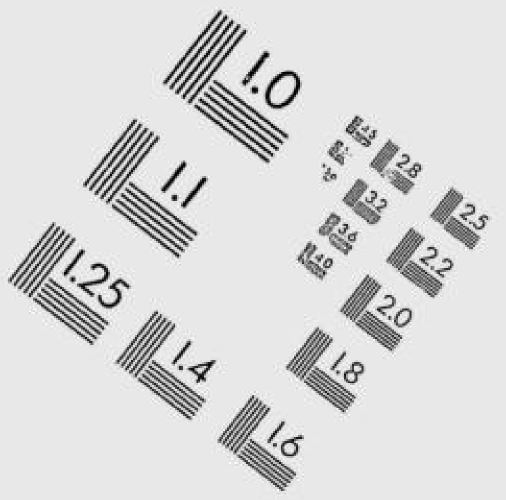

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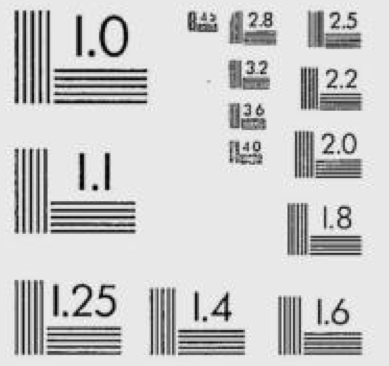

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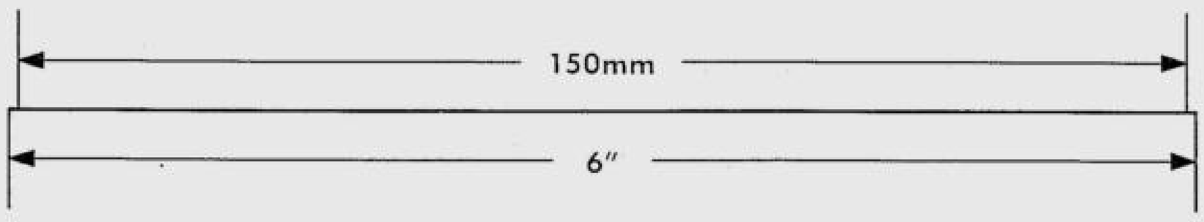

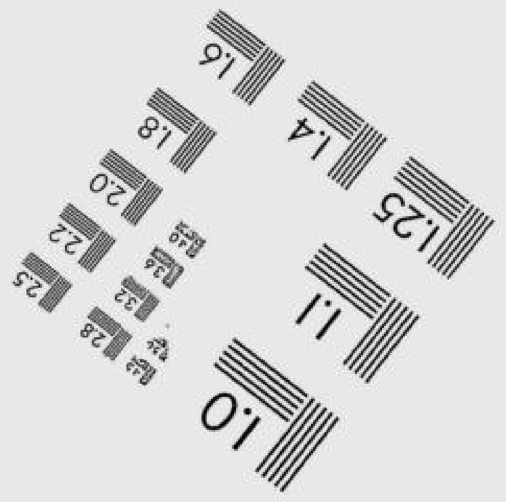

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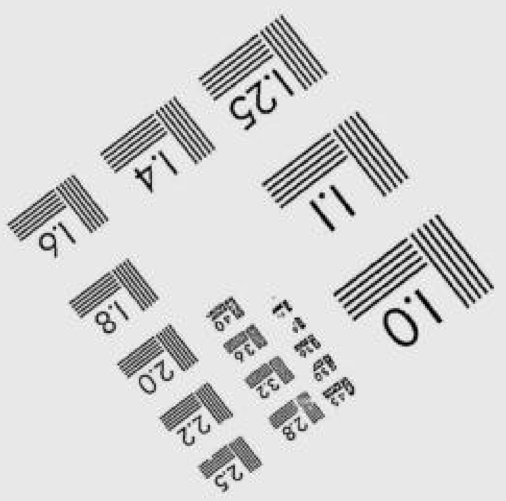

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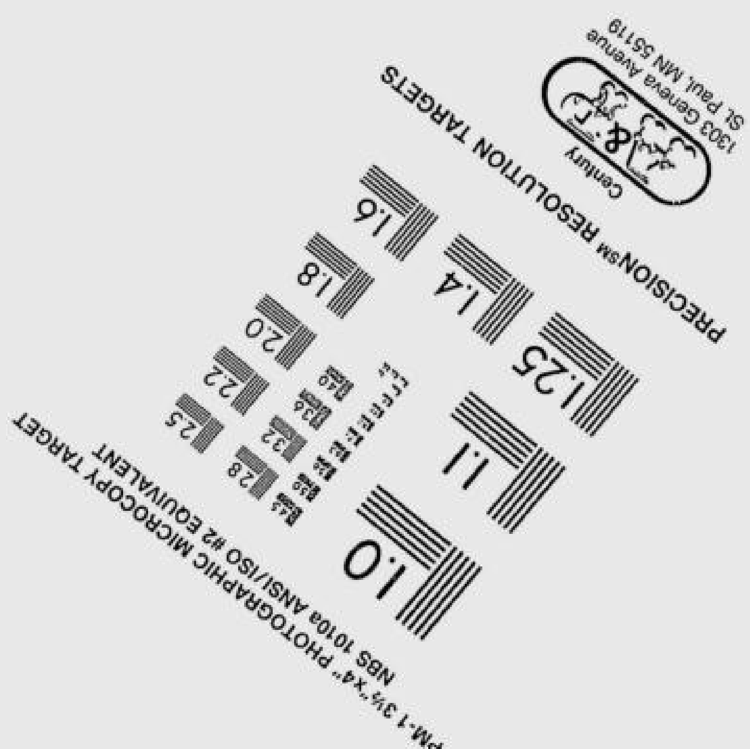

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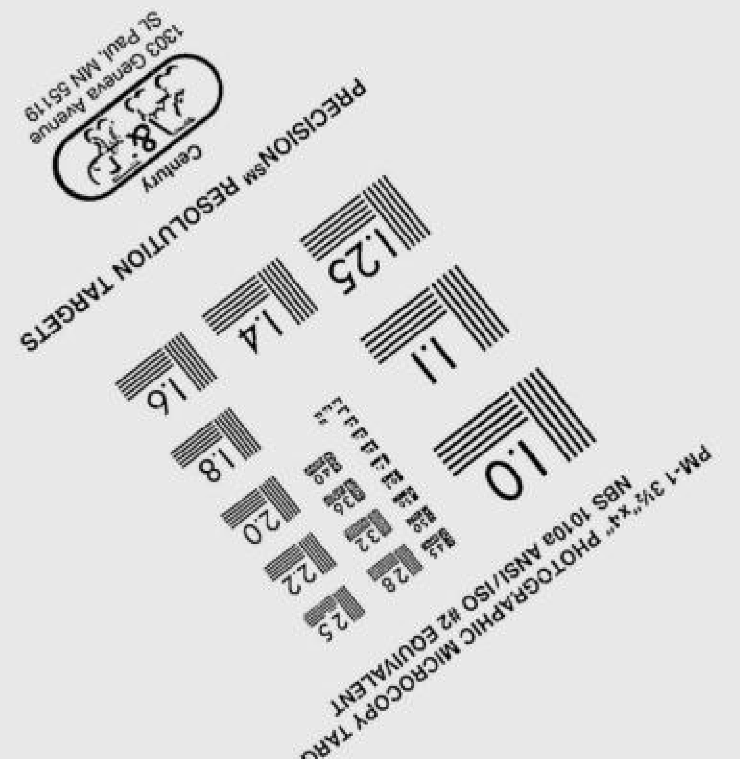

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